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THE STEWARDSHIP LIFE

THE STEWARDSHIP LIFE

AN ELECTIVE COURSE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS APPROVED AS A SUPPLEMENTARY TEXT IN THE STANDARD TRAINING SERIES

BY

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United Theological Semi
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COKESBURY PRESS
NASHVILLE, TENN.
1930

14613
The Evangelical School of Theology

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Printed in the United States of America

To My Mother

SARAH ANN BROWDER CRAWFORD

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE
AND IN RECOGNITION
OF HER
PRAYERS, INFLUENCE, AND
EARLY TRAINING

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

FOREWORD

WHAT is the prevalent conception of Christian stewardship to-day in the popular mind? Is this conception correct? What is the primary purpose of stewardship teaching in the mind of the average person? Is this really its main purpose? What is the point of view from which stewardship has been chiefly interpreted and taught? Is this the viewpoint of Jesus?

Frank discussion of these and similar questions in personal conversation with many ministers and laymen, with denominational and interdenominational leaders, and in group conferences and meetings of both ministers and laymen, of secretaries of mission boards, boards of education, and other boards, and of stewardship executives, and an investigation of the literature which bears the insignia of stewardship, point to the following conclusions: First, most people think of Christian stewardship in terms of money rather than in terms of life. Second, the primary purpose of stewardship teaching has been financial instead of educational, the raising of funds rather than the building of character. Third, the bulk of stewardship literature, preaching, and teaching has been from either a legalistic or a mixed point of view and has stressed the mechanical observance of a legal requirement supposed to have been laid upon all Christians alike rather than from the viewpoint of Christian liberty and the supremacy of Christ in the motives.

In the light of this situation, the principal need of the Church to-day with reference to Christian stewardship

is to clarify its meaning and purpose, and to vitalize its message by a deeper study of the subject from the New Testament point of view.

The giving of money and of time for the service of the kingdom of Christ is a most important practical aspect of Christian stewardship, yet we can no longer confine its interpretation and application to these alone. Neither is stewardship synonymous with tithing. It comprehends the responsibilities of a Christian in the many relationships of life. It emphasizes the element of obligation that inheres in the gospel. It takes into account every phase of human living. It is in the sense of personal responsibility of the individual to God in the matter of possessions of all kinds—life, time, talent, energy, money, and all forms of power or wealth—that the term "stewardship" is used in this book.

One of the objectives toward which a dynamic curriculum should strive, according to William Clayton Bower, in "The Curriculum of Religious Education," is "the responsible mind." The study of stewardship is a means to this end. The creation of a sense of responsibility on the part of Church members is essential to their spiritual health and growth and to the ultimate success of the Christian cause. Full participation in the worship, witnessing, serving, and giving program of the Church by every member is the ideal. The Church is under obligation to give every youth and adult the opportunity to come into a real personal possession of the power of Christianity. If stewardship principles become a part of the working tools of the Church, a more intelligent and deeper passion for Christian living and giving will inevitably result.

I have a growing conviction that to cultivate and

deepen the realization of responsibility for the proper development and use of all human powers and possessions is the most fundamental need of the hour. Such a realization beyond question would stimulate a nobler and broader type of consecration and a higher order of beneficence, and would hasten the spread of Christ's kingdom throughout the earth.

In the introduction to his book, "Christ at the Round Table," Dr. E. Stanley Jones says: "If there has been one guiding principle which has held me these years, it has been this: No plans that cannot be changed if they cease to be vital and real, and no convictions that cannot be altered if fuller light comes." I desire to commend this principle as a motto for every person who begins the study of Christian stewardship.

J. E. C.

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CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL SURVEY

THE sense of personal responsibility—the stewardship consciousness—has been developing from the dawn of history. The capacity for such development is innate. It was born with the race.

The idea prevailed among primitive peoples that there must be some relation between human beings and the divine power that made them and the universe in which they lived. Primitive worship, therefore, took the form of offering sacrifices to the gods in recognition of their creative power, and to secure their favor.

The offering of sacrifices was followed by the devoting of a separated portion of one's property to the uses of religion. The earliest form of separated portions was that of the firstling, or first animal born, and the first fruits, or first part of the crop harvested. The practice of dedicating the firstlings and first fruits is known to have existed among many ancient peoples. In all these sacrifices and offerings there appeared the general principle that to the god the first and best must be dedicated. From the law of the first fruits there emerged the law of the tithe, which was originally a tax levied on grain and the products of the soil. This law was widely prevalent among pagans; it was in operation among the Babylonians, Phœnicians, Persians, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Greeks, Romans, and others. Though mainly religious, the tithe was also political, and sometimes represented both taxation for the state and offerings for the temple worship.

Old Testament Background

The first recorded acknowledgment of stewardship in material things in Bible history is that of the two brothers, Cain and Abel. The earliest examples of the stewardship of life were Enoch, the companion of God, Noah, the preacher of righteousness, and Abraham, the friend of God and father of the Hebrew race.

The Hebrew Tithe.—Like other primitive races, the early Hebrews made their gifts to deity by means of sacrifices. Then, as an outgrowth of the practice of devoting first fruits to the worship of God, the tithing custom came into vogue.

This custom was made obligatory by legal statute. In the Pentateuch there are three distinct records of laws concerning tithes (Deut. 14: 22-29, 26: 12-15; Num. 18: 20-32; Lev. 27: 30-33). To correspond with these records it has been commonly supposed that three different tithes were required of the Jews—the festival tithe, the charity tithe, and the holy tithe. Many able scholars, however, have now abandoned this theory. What they consider more highly probable is that the law of the tithe varied in its application in three distinct stages in Hebrew history, as each of these references seems to belong to a different period.

Chronologically the order appears to have been somewhat as follows: The tithe was first eaten at a family feast. This feast was a primitive custom, and when it was first introduced the tithe, according to some authorities, was another name for the first fruits. These feasts gave rise to many abuses, the rich monopolizing the feasts and oppressing the poor. To correct these practices and protect the poor, it was provided that

every third year ("the year of tithing") the tithe should be devoted to the relief of the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. (Deut. 26: 12.) With the accumulation of property and the introduction of more orderly worship, the situation vastly changed. Worship was centralized at Jerusalem. This made it necessary for all the priests to be brought there, and provision had to be made for their support. Accordingly the family feast was eliminated and it was ordered that the whole tithe should be given the Levites for the maintenance of the religious organization, and the Levites in turn were required to pay a tithe of the tithe to the priests. Moreover, a new feature was added—namely, that the tithe of the herd and flock should be given as well as the tenth of the agricultural products.

Expanding Conceptions.—With the religious development of the Hebrews there was a corresponding growth in their conception of stewardship. This development was due mainly to the leadership of the prophets. For the prophets emphasized motive. Under them there was a violent reaction against externalism.

They made it clear that responsibility cannot be discharged by conformity to external requirements; that sacrifices and offerings without true heart worship and holy motives are valueless and offensive to God. (1 Sam. 15: 22, Isa. 1: 16, Hos. 6: 6, Mic. 6: 7, 8.) They looked beneath externalism into the heart and laid bare the essence of true religion. They interpreted God's attitude toward the living issues and needs of their day.

Period of Lawlessness.—The emphasis placed by the prophets on inner attitude and motive as contrasted with outward and formal conformity to law led to a reaction against the law and a consequent disregard for

it. There was a feeling that the law and the prophets were in conflict, that the prophets were against the law. This, together with the demoralization of Jewish worship brought about by the Babylonian captivity, resulted in a period of lawlessness on a broad scale.

Following Israel's return from exile, a prophet was raised up with a message specially adapted to their changed conditions. That prophet was Malachi. He saw the wholesale disobedience of the people, their wide neglect of the requirements of the law. He saw the underlying cause of all this lawlessness; it was broken fellowship with Jehovah, the dying out of the people's love for God and their realization of his love for them. He saw, moreover, that this waning of interest and this loss of fellowship were due mainly to the neglect of the temple services, and that this neglect was traceable to the fact that the priests had to turn aside from their ministry to make their own living because the people failed to bring in their tithes.

The prophet saw also the relation between motive and conduct, that right motive is the root and right conduct is the fruit of true religion. He made it clear, therefore, that there was no antagonism between the law and the prophets, that each had its own proper function; that the freedom of motive is the liberty of righteousness and not a license for lawlessness; that obedience is the evidence of a right heart; and that the restoration and support of orderly worship were absolutely essential to bring the people back to Jehovah, which alone would cure the existing evils. Since such restoration and support demanded funds, he pointed out in unmistakable terms that the path of return to the divine favor was the accustomed way prescribed

in the law: "Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse."

In his parting words Malachi commended the law of Moses to the Hebrew people as the standard and safeguard of their conduct. By this law the nation was to rule its life while it waited for the fulfillment of the promise of the Elijah who was to come. (Mal. 4: 5, 6.)

Age of Pharisaism

In the four hundred years that followed there was a swing back from heart devotion to externalism in religion which culminated in the Pharisaism which Christ encountered in the days of his flesh. Legalism became the only orthodoxy. Loyalty to God became loyalty to a system of commandments. In the law as nowhere else the voice of God was heard: it sounded not only in the parts regarded as original, but also in the additions made by interpretation. The scribes and Pharisees, who were the ecclesiastical leaders of the time and whose righteousness consisted in a dreary routine of formalism, taught the people that salvation came by the law and the law alone. Individual judgment was ruled out; conscience itself was construed to mean sense of duty to keep the law.

Neither were the masses allowed the liberty of interpreting and applying the law; only those who sat in Moses' seat had authority to do this. The supervision of conduct became minute. Conformity to the external parts of the law was more easily tested, and therefore received more attention. Institutions were exalted above the persons for whom they were instituted; laws were more sacred and valuable than the individuals for whom they were established; outward

acts and appearances determined acceptability with God rather than the thoughts, intents, and motives of the heart.

The Dawn of a New Epoch

Into such an atmosphere Jesus came preaching freedom, love, and faith, exalting life above form, and proclaiming the primacy of persons among all values. With his coming the crass, legalistic, mechanistic, and literalistic religion of the Pharisees received its most deadly blow. He combined in himself the law and the prophets and fulfilled both. He revealed the Author of the law and the God of the prophets as a Father who has a father's interest in the whole human family and is anxious for all to love and trust him.

He made it plain that personality is the real source of all values. He taught that material wealth should be used to advance spiritual ends. He interpreted all that had gone before in the light of its deep underlying purpose. In forming his judgments he looked beneath the surface into the real motives of men, and went about changing their lives by changing their motives—regenerating their hearts.

According to him it was of no avail that the Pharisees gave tithes if they omitted the weightier matters of justice, mercy, and faith. But Matthew's feast was acceptable, Zaccheus's action in giving half of his goods to the poor was commendable, Mary's box of alabaster was not wasted, and the widow's mites represented a blessed liberality—all because these persons possessed loving hearts and their gifts were worthy expressions of their love.

To what he received from the Scriptures, the fathers,

and the religious teachers of his day, he added at least two things: (1) His superior teachings embodied in the Sermon on the Mount, his parables, his conversations with his disciples and others, and the lessons taught by his miracles. (2) His own example as a perfect steward. He was God's greatest Steward—the perfect embodiment of all that a steward ought to be.

A fuller statement of the significance of Christ's coming and the conception of stewardship which he revealed is contained in chapter three.

Interpretation and Application in the Church

How have the stewardship teachings of Jesus been interpreted and applied in the different eras in the Church during the nineteen centuries of Christian history? Chiefly in terms of material possessions and methods of Church finance.

The Pentecostal Plan.—The Christian ideal of brotherhood and social responsibility is seen in the outburst of fraternal stewardship at Pentecost. The early disciples were so imbued with the Spirit of Christ that they willingly and voluntarily gave everything to the service of the kingdom. They were brothers, and no one was allowed to lack.

Their spirit, attitude, and view of material possessions accorded exactly with the teaching of Jesus that God is the ultimate owner and the kingdom demands all. Their method of applying his teaching was suited to the needs of the hour, but was not designed to be a permanent policy. By selling their property and putting the proceeds into a common fund, they made it possible for the young Church at Jerusalem to provide for the hundreds of pilgrims from various parts of the world

who had come to the feast, many of whom had cut themselves off from family and friends and their means of support by their profession of the new faith. While the number of Christians was small and they were concentrated in Jerusalem, this plan of voluntary communism prevailed. Doubtless their expectation of a speedy return of Christ was an influential factor in the adoption of this plan. But it could not be continued when the supply of funds was exhausted.

That the early Christians themselves did not regard this policy as permanent is evident from the fact that when they became scattered and the number of churches increased we do not find this plan adopted in any other Christian center.

The Pauline Policy.—The Jews had been trained in systematic giving for centuries, and their ingrained habit of tithing made it comparatively easy for them to give under the impulse of Christian love. The case was different, however, with the Gentile converts who had been steeped in the pagan conception of ownership. It required more diligent and painstaking efforts to school them in the principles of Christian stewardship.

Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles and did more in this regard than any one else. He set them an example in liberality; he invested his all—time, talent, education, craftsmanship, material possessions, and life itself—for the spread of the gospel. He insisted that his converts should give money for benevolent purposes—the support of teachers and ministers, evangelists and missionaries, and the poor. He organized and carried through the greatest charity of his time, taking a collection in all his churches for the poor saints at Jerusalem. He taught that giving was a Christian's obligation

and could not be avoided; that liberality was a virtue and brought spiritual rewards; and that giving should be regular, systematic, cheerful, and proportionate.

Love, not law, was the motive he urged for Christian giving. (2 Cor. 8: 9, 12; 9: 5, 7.)

Everybody giving, everybody giving systematically, everybody giving gladly, everybody giving proportionately; this, in brief, was the apostle's counsel.

Early Post-Apostolic Benevolence.—During the first three hundred years of Christian history the Church was bitterly persecuted, and there was great need of charity. Some believers were driven from their homes, some imprisoned, some sold into slavery. Others lost their positions on account of their faith or abandoned work that was incompatible with their new profession. The property of still others was confiscated, while the lot of widows and orphans was unusually hard. Moreover, Christianity had a special message to the poor, and the poor flocked to the Church.

These conditions were met by a generosity prompted by the compulsion of love that far surpassed anything the Jews had known under the compulsion of law. The poor were provided for, the prisoners fed, the captives ransomed, and the unfortunate cared for. The Christians brought gifts to the Church regularly from week to week or month to month, and made other voluntary offerings of a special nature. Some wealthy converts sold most of their property and gave the money to the Church for the benefit of the poor or for the evangelization of distant countries.

In all the liturgies used in the early Church for the services at which the offerings were made, the principle of voluntary, freewill gifts is invariably set forth.

Era of Externalism.—Early in the fourth century following the edicts of Constantine, the Church was united with the Roman Empire, and a strong tendency toward secularization set in. As the imperial treasury now subsidized the Church, laws were passed to augment its wealth. Before the year 400 A.D. the payment of tithes had come into vogue and the Church leaders of this period contended for it as a divine ordinance. The Synod of Macon, in 585 A.D., ordered all Christians to pay the tenth on pain of excommunication. Other Church Councils also enjoined it, and about 800 A.D. the Emperor Charlemagne made the payment of tithes to the Church obligatory by legal statute. Many abuses in connection with the tithing law soon arose in both Church and State. These abuses continued in more or less aggravated form for several centuries.

Renaissance of Christian Motive.—Finally a revival of liberty and Christian motive brought relief.

This revival began with the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century under the leadership of Martin Luther and others. It grew out of teaching the masses that they need no longer pay tribute to the Church of Rome in order to be saved, that salvation came by faith—simple faith. This was a revelation to thousands who had been spending their earnings in purchasing indulgences from the priests of the Roman Church; who had been taught that salvation could be obtained only with gold. This gospel of vitality attracted hundreds of thousands who had drifted away from the Church altogether.

Deeper and more far-reaching still was the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century which had its beginning in the experience of John Wesley. It, too,

was a heart movement—a revival of pure and undefiled religion—that resulted in a remarkable change.

There was a reëmergence in history and human consciousness of those great spiritual forces which are the vital and essential characteristics of true Christianity. The masses of England were aroused from their moral and spiritual torpor and brought to a devoted and active life in Christ. The movement spread to America and other countries also.

Modern philanthrophy, the modern missionary movement, and to some extent the modern Sunday school movement were products of this great revival.

A Thrice-Repeated Lesson.—It is the verdict of history that the mere possession of wealth by the Church may be a curse instead of a blessing, especially if that wealth is secured by unchristian methods and used by unholy hands for unrighteous ends.

In the closing days of the old dispensation the Jewish Church became rich, but the enormous wealth was concentrated in the hands of a few priests who exacted as tithes not only one-tenth but any amount they saw fit, and who "devoured widows' houses and for a pretense made long prayers." The last great struggle during the reign of terror in the Judean revolution in the days of Josephus centered around the control of the priestly tithe-stores at Jerusalem.

The Roman Church was rich in material resources in the days of Martin Luther. In fact, it owned nearly all of Europe, but its riches were ill-gotten through the sale of indulgences, the extraction of the tithe by force of law, and political intrigue.

The Church of England in the time of John Wesley

was wealthy because of its connection with the State and the collection of the tithe by law.

In these three eras of spiritual decline the prevailing ecclesiastical organization was wealthy, and had become so through external methods. But the vital, spiritual needs of the world were not being met and new movements based on the religion of the heart were in the providence of God called into being.

Awakening of the Nineteenth Century.—An illustration of the blessing that comes to the Church when it is prompted by spiritual motives and employs righteous methods in securing and using larger sums is the revival of the nineteenth century.

This revival was brought about by the study and promulgation of the doctrine of Christian stewardship, which led the Churches of England and America to consecrate their property more fully and whole-heartedly than ever before to the program of the kingdom. Christian leaders in Scotland, Ireland, and America set themselves definitely to the task of arousing their people on the question of Christian stewardship. Preachers preached on this theme. Editors wrote on it. Books and tracts multiplied. A stewardship literature was produced, the best in the history of the Church up to that time. And men and women began to form life purposes of giving according to principle.

Particularly between the years 1850-55 hundreds of churches on both sides of the Atlantic felt the movement. Contributions on a larger scale began to flow into the treasuries of the various denominations, and by 1865 the incomes of the boards of the leading missionary churches had made an advance of fifty to five hundred per cent.

But the material advance was not all. "Early in 1857 the Spirit of God began to call the people to prayer. The set time had come to favor Zion—the time that can always be set when an obedient Church makes it possible for God to pour out his blessing." "As though a channel had been cut for the swelling tides of God, the revival of 1858 followed the pathway of the stewardship campaign that had preceded it. The North of Ireland and the Scottish and English Churches were visited with extraordinary awakenings, which spread to the Colonial possessions oversea. Not since the days of Wesley and Whitefield had England seen such a manifestation of genuine religious interest; and, in America, all the churches shared together in the blessing that was poured out upon the land."[1]

Is not this epochal revival likewise a prophecy of far greater blessings that will come when the Christian Church, prompted by the stewardship motive—the sense of personal responsibility for participating in the program of the kingdom—lays her wealth voluntarily and joyously upon the altar for evangelizing and Christianizing the world?

FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Make an outline of the history of stewardship.
2. How would you explain the three different laws concerning tithes in the Pentateuch?
3. Did the tithe always mean an exact tenth?
4. Discuss the expanding conception of stewardship under the leadership of the prophets.
5. Compare the teachings of Paul and Malachi concerning the sharing of wealth.

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[1]From "A Man and His Money," by H. R. Calkins. Copyright, 1914. Used by permission of the Methodist Book Concern.

6. Is the Church to-day in danger of Pharisaism? Explain your answer.

7. What made "the Dark Ages"?

8. How do you explain the attitude of the pentecostal Christians toward property? Would the plan they adopted succeed to-day?

9. May the Church be handicapped by the possession of funds as well as by the lack of funds? Explain your answer.

10. Can you give an example from your own observation or experience of a spiritual awakening as the result of the preaching and practice of Christian stewardship?

CHAPTER II

THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

History bears record that in every age individuals or groups have had the stewardship idea in one form or another. The Church has always taught stewardship, more or less, though spasmodically and intermittently. Its stewardship teaching during the major portion of the Christian era, as we have seen, has been from the viewpoint of externalism. The chief, if not the sole, purpose of this teaching was to reap an immediate harvest of funds.

Prior to the twentieth century the use of the word "stewardship" was limited almost altogether to property relations. The prevailing view of Christian stewardship even until recent years was that of "the Christian doctrine of the believer's relation to property." And the principal thing stressed with reference to the Christian's relation to property was the giving of money.

But a new day has dawned. Since about 1900 there has been a more steady, persistent, widespread interest in stewardship teaching than ever before. From 1906 to 1917 the Laymen's Missionary Movement carried the stewardship message to several hundred thousand men in the United States and Canada. This Movement was especially active from 1909 to 1912. In the United Missionary Campaign (interdenominational) of 1913-15 stewardship was an important topic. The Executives' Council of the United Missionary Movement gave increasing attention to stewardship from 1916

until its last meeting, April 24, 1919. During the Inter-Church World Movement the stewardship representatives of the denominations met in May, 1919, and several times before their final meeting, June 22, 1920. With this group as a foundation the United Stewardship Council was formed in the fall of 1920. This Council is composed of the Stewardship Executives of all Protestant denominations of the United States and Canada desiring affiliation. From its first interest, which was to raise money for a missionary budget, the group of stewardship leaders and executives grew to regard the promotion of Christian stewardship as its main work. This revival of interest in stewardship was not confined to North America. From about 1910 to 1913 it began to assume world-wide proportions.

New Emphasis Leads to New Interpretation

More significant than the fact itself of the new emphasis growing out of organized group effort to promote stewardship, and of greater value to the kingdom than any increase in Church contributions brought about by stewardship cultivation, is the new interpretation of Christian stewardship to which intensive individual and group study stimulated by this new emphasis has led.

In the earlier stages of the modern stewardship movement the statements of Christian stewardship principles were mainly a dogmatic and legalistic insistence on the Jewish tithe. The conception of the Church, however, has been gradually altered and enlarged, in the light of the principles of religious education, to include the practice of stewardship in the whole life, making it cor-

respond more truly with the spirit and teachings of Jesus.

The old point of view has given place to that of Christian motive and the primacy of persons among all values. This has changed the major objective. For from this viewpoint it is clearly evident that the primary purpose of stewardship is not increasing Church finances or augmenting benevolence budgets, but rather the development of Christian character. Its aim is the full consecration of the entire self, the practice of life on its highest level, the richest possible experience through the management of life and all its resources for God and the good of all.

There are elements in the present-day stewardship presentation which seem to be new, because they have hitherto been unemphasized. For nothing that we have of personality, powers, or possessions is exempt from the law of stewardship. Christ's stewardship teaching covers the whole range of man's accountability. When related to property it embraces all the methods both of acquiring and distributing wealth—money-making, money-giving, money-saving, and money-spending.

But stewardship is vastly greater then the money question. The personality of God is wrapped up in it. An impersonal God could not own anything. But since God is personal, he may be thought of rightly as Creator, Owner, Upholder, and Giver of all things. Christian stewards recognize and acknowledge God's proprietary ownership and their trusteeship of the farm, of the factory, of the store, of the money in their pockets, in banks, mortgages, and stocks, and of any other material, as well as of all spiritual values.

Money-giving should be an act of worship and should

be lifted out of the sphere of legal requirement into the realm of love. The love of Christ constraineth us. Love in action is stewardship. Love conquers selfishness. The thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians is not mere sentiment; it is sound, practical stewardship philosophy. Love must and will find expression. Where love fails to win, force is hopeless. We cannot substitute the mallet for the magnet as a means of winning willing subjects for the King.

A stewardship doctrine based on anything less than a grasp of our Lord's viewpoint as revealed in the great body of his teaching is surely not for this time. We should always think of all life in relation to the program of Christ. For life is a unit, and is so set forth in the New Testament. We cannot be faithful stewards if we undertake to give one thing and withhold something else that God wants. To understand Christian stewardship we must understand the attitude of Jesus toward the whole of life.

Word Study

The word "stewardship" occurs in the Bible four times, "steward" thirteen times, and "stewards" five times. Luke uses "stewardship" three times (Luke 16: 2, 3, 4), and applies it to the office of administrator of the property of another. Paul employs it once (1 Cor. 9: 17), and uses it to indicate the responsibility which God had intrusted to him of preaching the gospel to the world.

The most common meaning of the word "steward" in the Old Testament is "the man who is over." This is close akin to its most frequent meaning in the New Testament, which is "an overseer, one to whom some-

thing has been intrusted, a house-manager." Throughout the English version of the Bible, therefore, this word conveys practically the same idea as to the relationship between God and man, which is that God is our Master, his interests are paramount, and we operate for him as his managers, overseers, or representatives.

The larger meaning and broader implications of Christian stewardship are confirmed by a study of the term itself.

The first word in the term is "Christian," which is used here as an adjective. It means "relating to Christ, belonging to Christ, or Christlike." Stewardship that is Christian is Christlike stewardship. Christ is its norm; his life is its chart; his teachings are its compass. His mind is final; the principles and ideals which he enunciated are ultimate.

The second word in the term is "stewardship." It is formed by adding "-ship" to the stem word, "steward." "Steward" comes from the Anglo-Saxon *stigweard*, which in turn is derived from *stigu*, a sty or pen, and *weard*, a guard or guardian. The original steward was the keeper of the pigsty or the protector of the cattle. From this humble origin the word rose in dignity until it came to mean the person in charge of the affairs of the household of another; the keeper of an estate, as "steward of the manor"; or the holder of a position of public trust, as the Lord High Steward of England.

All words ending in "ship" imply a definite relation between two persons or things. In the case of "stewardship" this definite relation is between two persons, man and God. At bottom, therefore, the relation between

man and God may be interpreted in terms of stewardship.

According to the historical meaning of the word, therefore, the steward had authority and responsibility delegated to him by his master or lord, and enjoyed fellowship with his master in proportion to his faithfulness or unfaithfulness in the discharge of the trust committed to his hand. This historical meaning must be brought over and applied to the Christian steward. He, too, has authority and responsibility as well as fellowship with his Lord and Master. God has given his children the privilege and the responsibility of participating with him in his purpose.

Definition

What then is Christian stewardship? It is the recognition and fulfillment of personal privilege and responsibility for the administration of the whole of life—personality, time, talent, influence, material substance, everything—in accordance with the spirit and ideals of Christ.

Illustrations

Few words are used in summing up the life of Enoch, but the simple statement that "he walked with God" conveys a whole volume of meaning. He met the responsibilities of life in such a way that even death itself was powerless to break the close and intimate companionship he enjoyed with God.

In Abraham, who left country and kindred in answer to God's call, we have the spectacle of a man who was a real steward—one who put himself and his all at the divine disposal. When he migrated from his native home in Ur of the Chaldees, no property holdings were

left behind to claim his attention or call him back. He devoted himself, his loved ones, and all his belongings to the success of the great missionary movement he had been divinely called to launch. His heart was not set on wealth, but on doing the will of God. His payment of the tenth of the spoils of war to Melchizedek after the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the rescue of Lot was simply one of many manifestations of his stewardship. He was a steward in the use of all his material substance. He was a praying steward. He held frequent converse with God. The story of his remarkable intercession in behalf of Sodom is one of the most unique and striking incidents in literature, sacred or profane. His impulse to worship and disposition to pray led him to build numerous altars for prayer and sacrifice. *He never refused God anything*, not even his son, Isaac, the heir of promise. He was a steward of divinely revealed truth. On eight different occasions God appeared to him in a series of progressive revelations, and trusted him with the truths he revealed to him and the leadership of the movement that made these truths the center, cause, and mainspring of its being. It was his belief in the one true God and the place he accorded it as the regulative principle of his life that has given "the Father of the Faithful" his everlasting influence.

The life of Joseph is one of the noblest in all history. He was one of the most faultless characters portrayed in either the Old or the New Testament. His poise was remarkable, his purity incorruptible, and his piety paramount. He stands out prominently among the people of those primitive days as a model steward. He was a model steward in his relation to God. The consciousness of God was central in his life. "The Lord

was with Joseph" is the significant phrase with which the narrator indicates the divine approval of his conduct. He knew himself to be the steward, the instrument, the medium of God. He had a lively sense of dependence upon God and of his duty toward him, and seemed ever conscious that he was in the hands of God. He was tested by the ill fortunes and the good fortunes of life. In misfortune he was resigned and uncomplaining, cheerful and alert, and when at length a new leaf was turned in his life on which there appeared nothing but brightness, in his elevation he neither presumed upon his position nor forgot his humbler relations. He bore the great changes of his life with calmness, fortitude, dignity, and repose, and put circumstances under his feet, because he identified his very soul's life with God. He was a model steward in his relation to his fellow men. Loyal and faithful, disinterested and sincere, modest and considerate, Joseph won the esteem of all right-minded persons with whom he had to do. He was obedient to duty in whatever position he found himself—whether feeding his father's sheep, looking after his master's house, acting for the keeper of the prison, or invested by Pharaoh with authority over Egypt. He was a model son, a model servant, a model brother, and a model ruler. He is a pattern of personal purity, an ideal illustration of the stewardship of a clean life. His fight for social purity is one of the best known and most decisive moral battles of the world. In the hour of temptation it was his sense of stewardship that came to his rescue: "Behold, my master knoweth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; there is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back anything from me

but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" God and religion were supreme in his life. From him we learn that there is something higher than the law of retaliation, that forgiveness is better than resentment; and that kindness, truth, and integrity win in the end. He is an example of what every young man should and, by the grace of God, can be in his personal habits.

The story of the first stewardship vow makes a special appeal to those who are starting out in life. Men may see in Jacob a reproduction of themselves, leaving home and perchance not with altogether pleasant memories, launching out into the world for themselves, with nothing but a knowledge of some business or profession, and perhaps not that. Happy are they who at the outset of their journey find their hope and security in a satisfying vision of God and a solemn dedication of themselves to his service. When Chester Ward Kingsley, the Boston banker, was a young man, a remark by his pastor inspired him to open a Benevolent Account, and many years later he told this same pastor that five hundred thousand dollars had passed through that account for the Lord's work. William Earl Dodge, the railroad magnate, began early in life to give away ten per cent of his small earnings. As his wealth increased, his gifts increased. At the time of his death, in 1883, it was estimated that for many years his contributions to charitable, educational, and benevolent objects had amounted to one hundred thousand dollars a year. Both these men were exemplary Christians, not only in the giving of money, but in other relationships of life as well.

William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army,

was a pawnbroker. Seeing the need of doing something to help the outcasts and down-and-outs of humanity, he became a minister and gave his life to the task of eliminating human waste and wreckage. Through his ministry many thousands who had reached depravity have been rescued and many more have been prevented from becoming depraved. In America alone there are more than 150,000 soldiers in the Army, and physical plants, including industrial homes, hotels, nurseries, social-service institutions, and other machinery for the relief of the distressed, with a reproductive value of $37,000,000. When General Booth became blind, he wrote in a letter to his daughter, Evangeline Booth, "I've done my best for God with eyes. Now I'll do it without eyes."

In Jesus Christ stewardship is raised to its highest degree of perfection. He gave himself. Through his sacrificial life and death he provided a way to lead humanity out of darkness, ignorance, and sin into the light and liberty of perfect day. By giving his life, he lived again in the lives of his disciples, and lives to-day in the hearts of all true stewards.

Conclusion

Is it not evident from this study that stewardship, according to both Old and New Testament usage, stands for the responsibility and privilege delegated to those who occupy positions of trust? The steward was the personal representative of his master. He knew his master's mind and he managed his affairs. Into his hands was committed the keeping of all his master's goods. His title, therefore, was one of honor and his position one of sacred trust. In this light stewardship

is an attractive and fascinating word, and Christian stewardship is a rich and glorious term, signifying the responsibility reposed in us by Christ as his representatives, his witnesses, his ambassadors, his coworkers, the trustees of his gospel on earth.

The complex and complicated conditions in modern life tend *to deaden the sense of personal responsibility.* This tendency is augmented by the rapid increase of wealth. The Church is in far greater danger to-day from indifference and decadence within than from infidelity or opposition without. *But God has made known his remedy for this condition that is threatening the life of the Church from within: it is Christian stewardship.*

The preaching and teaching of Scriptural stewardship will issue in lives joined in sacred partnership with God. Wealth accumulated and administered with a due sense of personal responsibility to God will drive back the ominious and menacing tide of materialism and win one of the mightiest victories in the history of our holy religion.

In view of the expanded and expanding conception of Christian stewardship, the dynamic motive of love from which the stewardship attitude and practice spring, and the urgent need of the modern Church for this safeguard against spiritual peril, is there any other task quite so imperative as that of awakening believers everywhere to the privileges and obligations of stewardship, and to its vital relation to all forms of Christian advance?

FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. How do you account for the misunderstanding and narrow interpretation of Christian stewardship in the past? For the enlarged and enlarging interest in this subject to-day?

2. Look up the words "steward," "stewards," and "stewardship" in the Old and New Testaments. Is the stewardship idea confined to the passages in which these words appear?

3. Define Christian stewardship in your own words.

4. What words are more or less synonymous with "stewardship"? Can you substitute any other word for "stewardship"?

5. Name some of the major influences which tend to deaden the sense of personal responsibility in the present age.

6. Do you regard the study of stewardship as important to-day? Why do you think as you do? What kind of stewardship education is needed to-day? For our country? For our Church? For ourselves?

CHAPTER III

THE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

CHRISTIAN stewardship rests upon the same foundation as the Christian religion itself—the person and character of God. What or who is God? He is the Creator, Owner, and Upholder of all persons and things. He is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. He has revealed himself in nature, by his Providence, through his prophets, in his Word, and finally in Christ. He is a personal Being who is best described as Father. Love is the essence of his nature. He has a benevolent program for all the world and a definite, dignified, worthwhile, glorious part in this program for every person in the world.

Since God's revelation of himself has been progressive, culminating in Christ, the basis of Christian stewardship is not the Abrahamic covenant nor Old Testament law, but "Jesus only," who is not only Saviour but Lord. He, and he alone, is the true and ultimate basis of Christian stewardship. His centrality and the primacy of his kingdom demand loyalty to him and identification with his spirit and purpose.

Jesus is the Revealer, the Interpreter of God and life. Through his teaching and through his life we see the character of God and what life ought to be. In the definition of Christian stewardship given in the preceding chapter, emphasis must be placed upon the clause "in accordance with the spirit and ideals of Christ." The recognition and fulfillment of personal

privilege and responsibility for the administration of one's life according to the temper and tenets of any one else, no matter how learned, great, or good, would not be *Christian* stewardship. The conception of stewardship which sets the only satisfactory and permanent moral standards of the world is the conception manifested in the life and teachings of Jesus. What are the main foundation sources from which Christian stewardship ideals and standards are derived? They are those teachings of Jesus which bear more directly on stewardship and his spirit and example as a Steward.

Some Teachings of Jesus

The Kingdom of God.—A right understanding of what Jesus meant by the kingdom of God is essential to the understanding of Jesus himself, and of his teaching and aim. As he conceived it, the kingdom is first a quality of life. "The kingdom of God is within you." It is its internal character that is vital, more than its external form. It takes its character from its King; it is an order of life in this present world that corresponds to his teaching and influence. This order of life is one that overcomes the world because it is lived in personal fellowship with the Father, from whom its motive and inspiration proceed.

Jesus used this phrase also to describe the kind of society he is trying to set up. The kingdom of God is the embodiment of his ideal for humanity. As such, it is likewise a kingdom that is operative in the conditions of this world, an order of life here and now—the reign of God over the social as well as the individual life of men. While he spoke and wrought he was laying the foundations of this kingdom. It is a life of mutual

service and help, impelled by an unselfish devotion to others. The Son of Man came to headship in the kingdom by way of supreme self-sacrifice. This must be the method of the kingdom, for it is the method of the King. By complete devotion of himself to others he has fashioned the type for all who belong to his kingdom. The permeating of all the life of all mankind with the Christian motive is the task of the stewards of the kingdom.

Motive versus Law.—Jesus saw and indicated the method by which his vision of the kingdom is to be realized. It is not that of external pressure. He saw the "law" as a system of rules defeating itself. "His idea of the way to bring in right living," says William Newton Clarke, "was very different from that of the law. He knew that the working power must be from within. He would lead men to act upon sound principles out of a free heart, to give glad exercise to good affections, and thus to be genuine doers of the work for which they were created. This could not be done by rule; it required education of the man. His training could not take the form of an external discipline; it must be personal, inward, flexible, suggestive, transforming. . . . He was a revealer, an enlightener, a renewer, an awakener of motives, and a mover of men. It is insufficient even to describe him as a teacher—how much more as a lawgiver! He was an inspirer, a creator of ideals, a deliverer from spiritual limitations, a vivifier of souls, a breather of power to fulfil the ideals he created."[1]

The center of power in the Christian religion is in the

[1]From "The Ideal of Jesus." Published by Charles Scribner's Sons. Used by permission.

motive. The supremacy of Christ in the motives commits the steward freely to the acceptance of the principle that the total life process is subject to the power of the Christian ideal, thus rendering the person, all possessions, and all influence in relationships available as means for the promotion of the kingdom of God.

His Scale of Values.—With Jesus the kingdom of God is first. For it all evil things are to be excluded and all good things esteemed and consecrated. Health, food, raiment, shelter, education, recreation, comfort, money, pleasure—all these have their legitimate place in human life, though their relative importance varies. None of these, however, takes first rank in the mind of Jesus. According to him one thing and only one can be first, and that is the kingdom. "Make His Kingdom and righteousness your chief aim, and then these things (that is, temporal necessities) shall all be given you in addition." (Matt. 6: 33, Weymouth's translation.)[2] Thus he calls upon men who are consuming all their energies in accumulating the externals of life to recentralize their lives around the most valuable object of devotion—his kingdom.

When he found men appraising the keeping of a Sabbath law more important than helping a man, he straightway corrected this erroneous idea of values: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Recognizing that a man's treasure, the thing on which he sets his affections, is what he counts so valuable that he subordinates other things to it, Jesus set about to reconstruct the standards of value by which

[2]Copyright by the Pilgrim Press. This and other quotations from Weymouth's translation, found elsewhere in this book, are used by permission.

men live. He taught that every other interest on earth is secondary to human interest, that personality is preëminently valuable: worth more than flowers (Matt. 6: 30), more than sparrows (Matt. 10: 31); more than sheep (Matt. 12: 12); more than the most sacred religious institution—the Sabbath (Mark 2: 27); yea, more than the whole material universe (Matt. 16: 26).

Perceiving that his chief enemy in winning men to accept his standard of values was Mammon, material wealth, he gave this enemy major consideration in his preaching and teaching. In fact, he had more to say about property and man's relation to it than about any other one thing. A careful student of his sayings declares that sixteen of his thirty-eight parables, one verse out of every seven in the four Gospels—in fact, one-half of his teachings—relate to this theme. He valued things only for what they can do for souls. He put personality above property; he counted a poor lunatic of more value than a whole herd of hogs (Mark 5: 2-20). He taught that wealth should do the will of God; that property should promote personality; that money should be utilized to help men live at their best; that men could only come to their best both in the realization and the achievements of life by making the kingdom of God supreme in their lives. In his eyes property was made for man and not man for property, and life should not be the tool of capital, but capital should be invested for the development and enrichment of life.

Character and not money constitutes the true riches in his sight. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." "I am the life." "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

Just as he regarded character as of supreme value in the case of the individual, so he regarded character in society as the most valuable of all social treasures. He hated covetousness as a mother hates a plague that robs her children of health and life. He did not discount the physical necessities of man's nature, neither did he consider freedom from economic want the true treasure. With him wealth of life in personal character and social righteousness is the only real wealth.

The Spirit and Example of Jesus

The motives of Jesus, the spirit and temper which characterized his actions, and the decisions which he made provide the Christian steward with the best possible pattern for his own attitudes, acts, habits, and choices.

His Sense of Mission.—Jesus was impelled by a sense of mission. "It is my duty to be engaged upon my Father's business." (Luke 2: 49.) "I have come as my Father's representative." (John 5: 43.) "The ever-living Father has sent me." (John 6: 57.) "I have left heaven and have come down to earth not to seek my own pleasure, but to do the will of him who sent me." (John 6: 38.) "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as the redemption-price for many." (Matt. 20: 28.) "I have come that they may have Life, and may have it in abundance." (John 10: 10.) "I am laying down my life in order to receive it back again. No one is taking it away from me, but I myself am laying it down. I am authorized to lay it down, and I am authorized to receive it back again." (John 10: 17, 18.) "We must do the works of Him who sent me while there is daylight. Night

is coming on, when no one can work." (John 9: 4.)[3] Jesus was unalterably committed to the service of the Highest. With him duty was never debatable. The attraction of his regal task drew him with an irresistible power. He felt the magnetic lure of doing good. Influenced by the constraining pull of heavenly forces, he counted himself shut up to one course and only one, the fulfillment of the will of God in the redemption of the human race.

Personal Traits.—Jesus was reverent; he was prayerful; he was obedient to the Father and trusted him implicitly. He was constantly aware of the Father's presence and approval. He was sincere. In his day religion was too often one complicated pretense. But Jesus was genuine. He was at heart what he appeared to be on the surface. He never acted in any relation other than lovingly, and he never spoke on any subject other than truly.

Jesus was patient. He was never hurried. He was not disturbed about the outcome of his mission. He never seemed anxious for his success. He did not grow impatient with impetuous and backsliding Peter. He likened the kingdom unto leaven, which works slowly, and to seed planted in the ground, which grows gradually. He was not uneasy about the future of his cause.

Jesus was humble. The circumstances of his birth identified him not with the privileged few, but with the common many. Though sinless, he chose to be baptized of John that even in this act he might make himself one with his brethren. He disavowed credit for what he did. "The Son can do nothing of himself." (John 5:

[3] All quotations in this paragraph are from Weymouth's translation of the New Testament.

19.) "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (John 14: 10.) He took upon himself the form of a servant. He said to his disciples, "I am among you as he that serveth." He taught them a never-to-be-forgotten lesson of humility and service by taking a basin and a towel and washing their feet on the night of his betrayal. (John 13: 3-17.) Even after his resurrection he did not consider himself above preparing them a meal. (John 21: 9-13.)

Jesus was loyal. He was loyal to his friends and to his purpose. Having loved his disciples, "he loved them to the uttermost." His friends and those who were to become his friends constituted the chief burden of his high-priestly prayer (John 17). He was loyal to his three friends of Bethany and brought Lazarus back from the tomb. While on the cross he remembered his widowed mother and commended her to the care of John the beloved. He was loyal to the purpose for which he came. When Peter sought to turn him from the path of the Cross, he rebuked him sternly. When his disciples, cognizant of the danger, essayed to keep him from going into Judea on the occasion of his last visit, he would not be deterred, but "set his face to go to Jerusalem." In the agony of Gethsemane he cried, "Not my will, but thine, be done." He was loyal to the Father, to his friends, and to the task of saving a lost world.

His Motives.—The compassion of Jesus moved him to action in behalf of human suffering and human need. He sympathized with the hungering multitudes, whether that hunger was the hunger of the body or the deeper hunger of the soul. He wrought a miracle to feed

the five thousand and again the four thousand; he called his disciples to prayer for more laborers that the shepherdless throngs might not be left scattered and fainting. He was full of pity for the poor, the unfortunate, and the distressed; he sympathized with the suffering. Pain in its every form appealed to him; misery drew virtue from his heart. He could not look upon the deaf, the dumb, the blind, the halt, or the diseased without his soul going out to help them. The miracles that made him so popular with the masses attest his divinity, yet they were performed for the relief of human suffering. He touched blind eyes and they saw; he touched mute tongues and they spoke; he touched deaf ears and they heard; he touched fatal disease and it vanished away. He healed the leper; he cured the epileptic; he restored the paralytic, the palsied, the demoniac; and he brought the dead to life. He was the most compassionate person that ever trod the earth, and the appeal of his compassion, like a mighty spiritual magnet, drew multitudes to him in his own age and in the intervening ages, and continues to draw thousands to-day.

The all-inclusive motive in the life of Jesus was love. It was love that prompted him to embark on his saving mission and that held him steady on his sacrificial course. Back of his compassion was the deeper motive of love. It was love that inspired his perfect obedience to the Father and prompted his perfect service to men. He was the Father's love gift to the world, and prompted by love he "emptied himself." "I am the Good Shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his very life for the sheep." (John 10: 11.) "No one has greater love than this—a man laying down his life for his friends." (John 15: 13.)

The whole movement for man's redemption was a love movement. In the incarnation the word "Love" was made flesh. The radiant picture of God as a loving Father became forever fixed in human form. Whether he was walking through the cornfields in the morning, or sitting on Jacob's well at noon, or in the boat at the edge of Tiberias or under the tree at eventide, the impression Jesus made was always the same: that of Divine Love in earnest seeking to save that which was lost.

The demands of love are imperative. The Son so loved the Father that he could not say him "nay." He so loved men that he could not be content to see them perish. He loved men for what they are and what they may become, even though they, like the rich young ruler, may make "the great refusal." He loves in a peculiar and intimate way those who reciprocate his love and give up all for him. Not only does he love those who are indifferent to him, not only is he true in his affection for his friends and followers, but his love embraces even his enemies. "Love your enemies," he said.

Jesus himself is the best illustration of what, in the Sermon on the Mount and in his other discourses and sayings, he enjoined upon others. Even on the cross he practiced the doctrine he had preached—love in return for hatred, prayer in answer to persecution, and blessing in return for cursing. This is Love's way of winning the world. Love incarnated is more effective than law articulated. Love dying is more dynamic than duty enjoined. The cross of Christ is more compelling than the command of Christ. For love and law combine in Calvary!

Personal Application

What is the meaning of all this? What is the significance of this study of the teachings, spirit, and example of Jesus, from the standpoint of Christian stewardship? It means simply this: that the ideals which he held are the ideals which the Christian steward should hold, his estimate of values should be the estimate of values of the Christian steward, the motives which actuated him are the motives which should actuate the Christian steward, and the spirit which characterized his actions and determined his course is the spirit which should characterize the actions and determine the course of the Christian steward. His thought of life, his example, and his total attitude toward every responsibility and contact set for the Christian his own standard of stewardship. "Follow me," Jesus said, and he spoke with authority, for he is Lord of all. Stewardship that is Christian, therefore, must be based on *him*—his character and wish and program. The one business of the Christian steward is to follow him and shape his life after the similitude of this Greatest Steward.

FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Does everybody have a philosophy of life? What is yours? Does it harmonize with Jesus's view of life?
2. Contrast pagan conceptions with the Christian conception of life.
3. What is your conception of the kingdom of God?
4. Make a list of the main characteristics of the life of stewardship as taught and exemplified by Jesus.
5. In the light of his emphasis on motive and the primacy of persons among all values, do you think Jesus regarded tithing as a universal Christian obligation?

6. What parables of Jesus make some reference to property and man's relation to it?

7. What have you thought about stewardship in the past? Have you changed your views to any extent? If you are conscious of a changed viewpoint, what difference has this made in your teaching?

8. Would the complete acceptance and fulfillment of the Christian ideal make any difference in your life? in your Church? in your community?

CHAPTER IV

THE STEWARDSHIP OF PERSONALITY—DUTY OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT

JESUS is primarily interested in persons. According to him institutions, organizations, laws, beliefs, and customs are of value only as they aid in the development and realization of the potential powers of the person.

Personality is God's greatest gift. It is the most powerful force in the world. It is the most tremendous thing of which we are stewards. The obligation of the person to develop himself and all his powers is, therefore, his first and most important obligation as a steward.

The whole person is involved in living the Christian life. Experience teaches us the unity of life. The person is an entity. There is a marvelous intimacy of relations between the physical and the psychical—the body and the mind. They are not two separate entities. They are united; not mechanically, but organically. Every human action involves the complementary functioning of both mind and body. We never have an experience of body without mind, and we never have an experience of mind without body. "Not a thought or feeling arises in our consciousness but it quickens or slows the heartbeat, vibrates in the muscles, and otherwise reverberates through the physical organism. On the other hand there is scarcely a bodily change, save the most automatic, like breathing, but registers itself either consciously or uncon-

sciously."[1] No metaphor has yet been coined that adequately expresses this strange interfusion of the spiritual and the material. Nevertheless two facts are clearly evident: the dependence of the mind on the body and the dependence of the body on the mind. This interdependence exists and must continue so long as we are alive. Whatever a person does, whether it be moving, thinking, feeling, or willing, it is his total personality acting.

The Physical

Many ancient peoples regarded the body as the enemy of the soul—a necessary evil, an encumbrance, a weight that tends to submerge and destroy the soul. Consequently they considered it a virtue to weaken the body without destroying life by denying it rest, sleep, food, shelter, and even by self-inflicted torture. The Egyptians, however, appear to have had a profound respect for the body. They took care of it during life and preserved it after death. While other nations thought it religious to despise and ill-treat the body, they thought it religious to adore and worship the body, as they also worshiped the life principle in the animal and vegetable world. Medieval Christians believed that the body must be punished or abused in order to give the spirit a better chance to develop.

Neither of these views accords with the teaching of the Bible. While a thoughtful reading of the Old Testament compels a growing reverence for the body, nowhere is it regarded as an object of worship. The New Testament affirms that the body is the temple of God (1 Cor.

[1] "The Soul and Body in Present-Day Psychology," by D. Maurice Allan, Ph.D., in *Union Seminary Review*, October, 1928.

3: 16; 2 Cor. 6: 16), and on this ground warns against its defilement (1 Cor. 3: 17; 6: 18, 19). It is the temple both of the human and the Divine Spirit. The fact that God in Christ took upon himself human form renders the body peculiarly sacred.

The high estimate put upon the body by the Scriptures is confirmed by science, which recognizes that it is the organ of human activities, the person's only means of communication with the world in which he lives. In the language of the financier the body is capital loaned to the spirit for its use. In the light of divine revelation it is a sacred trust—one of God's most priceless gifts. "Ye are not your own." For "ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body." (1 Cor. 6: 19, 20.)

Why should we care for the body?

First, we owe it to ourselves to be good stewards of our bodies. Our own health—physical, mental, and spiritual—is involved. This physical house in which we live is a wonderful piece of workmanship, but it must be kept in order by obedience to the laws of health, if we are to be strong and well. Disease is a handicap; bodily vigor is a boon. Neglect of the body or violation of the laws of its life is sure to result in impaired health. By careful attention to diet, exercise, protection, and self-control, we should seek to attain our physical best.

"One of the strange spectacles," says William Hodges, "to be seen everywhere and every day is that of men operating their bodies at a loss in order to operate their business at a profit." He continues: "If life is valuable, then play is valuable when needed to prolong or preserve life. We talk about not having time to play. The things we haven't time to do are the

things which hurt, those which mar and unmake life." Time is not wasted or ill-spent which is devoted to things which make for self-preservation and prolongation of normal life.

The mental is conditioned by the physical. A healthy body is conducive to clear thinking. Abnormal pressure upon the brain or other vital organs may produce intellectual inertia, melancholia, or even insanity. The disposition of a child may be changed by the removal of an irritating cause; criminal tendencies may be produced by bodily injury or cured by its correction and relief. Not only mental processes, but spiritual experiences and moral character are affected by the physical state. Good health makes impossible many kinds of temptations. Wasted vitality and the shortening of life are the price dissolute youth must pay for squandering physical energies.

Longevity, strength, endurance, and physical power are the reward of those who are good stewards of their bodies. Wentworth Higginson made out a list of thirty of the great preachers of the last four centuries. It contained such names as Luther, Melanchthon, Knox, Jeremy Taylor, Paley, Fénelon, Robert Hall, Chalmers, John Wesley, and Channing. He found that the average length of their lives was sixty-nine years.

Jesus cured the physical ills of men. He made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk. He restored to health many who were diseased. Was not all this a prophecy that the body is to be raised to a higher condition by the power of Christianity?

Second, we owe it to our fellow men to be good stewards of our bodies. Disease is a social liability. It

is not only an individual affliction; it is a menace to one's fellows and to posterity.

Other things being equal, a healthy man can do much more for the advancement of the kingdom than a diseased man. The body should be healthy and strong, in order to aid in carrying the gospel message "into all the world." The Greek idea of the purpose of physical training was grace, symmetry, and strength of body; the Christian idea is life and service.

The Christian should seek health for the kingdom's sake. What the worker may accomplish depends upon his fitness as well as upon his time. We save time by taking time to regain lost energy and efficiency. How can we do our best without being at our best? How can we be at our best without a body at its best?

The stewardship of the body involves everything pertaining to its growth and welfare—food, sleep, exercise, recreation, hours of labor and study, habits, companionships, thoughts, words, deeds, images, and ideals. We are debtors to the past, the present, and the future. By grateful recognition of our obligations to the past and by noble living in the present we will be true benefactors to posterity. In so doing we will discharge our obligation to the oncoming generations, which have a right to be well born.

Only by holding our bodies in sacred trust as stewards of Christ can we render the highest service to the kingdom.

The Psychical

In the world of nature, animate and inanimate, man is supreme. Other creatures may be stronger, as the horse, the lion, the ox; or swifter, as the bird, the hare, the eagle; or more agile, as the monkey, the squirrel,

the cat; or larger, as the elephant, the giraffe, the hippopotamus. But man is the only creature who is endowed with the power of intelligent understanding, the gift of speech, and the ability to discern and choose between right and wrong. Because he is not only physical but psychical, not only material but spiritual, "a subtly-blended compound—mind-body," all other animals and even inanimate objects—seas, rivers, mountains, deserts, winds, lightning—are subject to his control. The psychic or soul-nature, commonly called the mind, is a most sacred trust. To protect, develop, and wisely employ the mind is indeed a high stewardship. The greatest incentive for training the mind is that we may understand, love, and serve God better and do more to bring in his kingdom.

The Intellectual.—The thinking powers of the person, ordinarily termed the intellect, are capable of great development. The main requisites for intellectual expansion are three—food, exercise, and atmosphere. Everything that contributes to thought is food for the mind. Wholesome mental food may be found in libraries, in good periodical literature, in our churches, and wherever well-informed persons speak or lecture on worth-while subjects. Any book, magazine, paper, sermon, lecture, story, picture, conversation, or scene that stimulates clean, honest, reverent thoughts is suitable food for the mind. Whatever stimulates unclean, dishonest, irreverent thoughts is unfit and should be avoided.

Thinking is good exercise. Intellectual exertion is essential to intellectual growth and strength. Thoughts must be assimilated and digested, if they are to be accurate and lucid; ideas must be analyzed; perplexing

problems must be attacked and solved; hard lessons must be studied and learned; and duties must not only be reviewed or admired but performed. All these demand vigorous intellectual activity and will tend to develop and vitally strengthen the powers of the intellect.

A healthy, wholesome atmosphere is essential for the mind to do its best work. Poisonous, debilitating, and disintegrating forces and influences make an environment in which the intellect cannot function normally.

The tendency of the unfed or improperly fed and undisciplined mind is to revert to the uncivilized or savage state. But with the right kind of food, exercise, and atmosphere the possibilities for the expansion of the intellect cannot be estimated. The atmosphere which Paul described in Philippians 4: 8 is ideal. Note his list of subjects worthy of thought and meditation: things that are "true," "honest," "just," "pure," "lovely," and "of good report." Such an atmosphere is conducive to the highest intellectual development. Let us "think on these things."

The body reaches its full size early in life, but the mind is of such a nature that it can and should continue to grow. Why then stop learning? Adults should not close the door to mental progress by ceasing to study. More and more we are witnessing unusual intellectual development and attainments, on the part of persons in middle life and even in old age.

As stewards of our thinking powers, we should strive to improve and enlarge these powers and should dedicate them to the loftiest service of God and humanity.

The Emotional.—The feelings have many forms of expression, such as fear, disappointment, anger, hate,

sorrow, joy, hope, and love. "Christian stewardship in the realm of the feelings consists in refusing to be driven into action at the call of any unworthy emotion."

God has given us the capacity to feel. And he appeals to us through his word, through his Son, and through the Holy Spirit to restrain and subdue the baser passions of our nature; to cultivate and crown our finer and loftier sentiments and desires for our own highest good, the welfare of society, and the weal of his kingdom. "Keep thy heart with all diligence (Heb., 'above all thy keeping'); for out of it are the issues of life," said the wise man. (Prov. 4: 23.) "Whether we have a hand worth lending depends on whether we have a heart worth keeping." Christ's coming into the heart cleanses the whole emotional life. A pure heart issues in a clean life and a clean life tends to make a healthy body.

The chief symbolical expressions of the æsthetic in man are architecture, painting, statuary, poetry, and music. What is the finest architecture but the expression of the æsthetic in building? What is painting but the æsthetic expressed on canvas? What is statuary, poetry, or music but sentiment fittingly expressed? What is oratory but passion of soul manifested in speech?

The most dynamic truths are those which come to us through the channel of experience. The great movements of history have had their genesis in experience. The origin of the Hebrew nation is traceable to God's revelation of himself and his purpose to Abraham. The Protestant Reformation began with the experience of Martin Luther; the Evangelical Revival was born in the heart of John Wesley; the whole movement for the

world's redemption was a heart movement: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son."

Religion generates the most powerful emotions known to man because it centers in values—those values that gather up into themselves all the worth and meaning of life. The opportunity for reverent service afforded by the emotional nature is truly wonderful. All the wealth of chivalry, patriotism, literature, art, romance, and family ties gives us but a glimpse of the vast possibilities of the future when the emotional life of disciples everywhere is offered in stewardship to God. It will mean "the steady, consistent, purposive bringing to bear of the ideals and purposes of the kingdom of God upon the practical outcomes of personal and social living."

The Volitional.—Volition is the very center of personality. The will is the citadel of the "town of Mansoul." It defends and controls. Acting under the influence of ideals and emotions, the person makes definite choice of a course of action. Two of the foremost thinkers of the past generation, William James and Henri Bergson, agreed that the quintessence of mind, that which most distinguished it from the body, is its power of choice.

The opportunity afforded the Christian steward in the proper exercise of this power is nothing short of sublime. The secret of the deepest joy and the greatest service is the surrendered will.

The man who prepares himself for his work is the man who wills to prepare. A boy on the farm, the eldest son in a large family, longed for an education. His parents were extremely poor and were dependent upon him to assist in the family support. His school advantages

were so meager that when he reached his seventeenth year he had not completed the fourth grade. At this age, however, as his younger brothers were now able to help at home, he left to go to school. He was without funds to pay his way. But he allowed nothing to deter him from his purpose. Seven years later he had not only finished high school but had also completed the requirements for the A.B. degree in a university. During this time he earned enough money to pay his own expenses and send a bit to his parents to help them along.

The man who achieves is the man who wills to achieve; the man who wins is the man who wills to win. Will shapes destiny. It is unconquerable and irresistible. Its possibilities are incalculable. The greatest accomplishments of history are treaceable to it. Think of its marvelous achievements in the realm of conquest, discovery, and invention.

Julius Cæsar declared, "The die is cast," and crossed the Rubicon to become the ruler of the civilized world. It was the will of the youthful Alexander that made him "Alexander the Great," the conqueror of the world. The will and courage of Columbus that led him to sail on and on and on regardless of every obstacle made him more famous than he dreamed. The mountain barriers of the Alps were overcome first by Hannibal and then by Napoleon, both leaders with indomitable will. What valuable contributions to the welfare of humanity are due to the tenacity, endurance, and determination of Washington, Jackson, Lincoln, Marconi, Whitney, Franklin, Roosevelt, Wilson! What gigantic victories will be won for our Lord when Christian leaders set their

wills to establish the kingdom of God on earth like the Master set his face to go to Jerusalem!

Power of Mind Over Body.—It is not always true that bodily health is essential to excellence of attainment, for there is a power that mind exerts over the body.

John Calvin, Robert Hall, William Pitt, Alexander Pope, and William of Orange were all invalids, but they did great things. Of the Prince of Orange, Macaulay says: "From a child he had been weak and sickly. In the prime of manhood his complaints were aggravated by severe disease. His slender frame was shaken by a constant cough. Severe headaches frequently tormented him. Exertion soon fatigued him. Yet through a life which was one long disease, the force of his mind never failed to bear up his suffering and languid body." Plutarch tells us that Julius Cæsar—soldier, statesman, writer, ruler—"was of a slender make, fair, of a delicate constitution, and subject to violent headaches and epilepsy." But this did not prevent him from becoming the master of the world. Dr. Johnson says of Pope: "His life was one long disease." The incessant labors of Calvin were pursued amid continual bodily pain and ill health.

These examples are given for those who cannot be well. They do not change the fact that good health is a great asset, and that it is a part of Christian stewardship to care for the health of the body.

Mastery of the Whole Self.—We are responsible to God for the development and the mastery of the whole self—body, intellect, emotions, and will. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart (the feeling nature), with all thy mind (the intellectual nature), with all thy soul (the volitional nature), and with all thy strength

(the physical nature)." Says Dr. E. Stanley Jones: "The whole man, including the physical, is to be brought under the sway of God. But with all thy strength would go farther than the strength of the physical—it would mean the strength of the mind, the strength of the feeling, the strength of the will. Many are loving God in an unbalanced and unsymmetrical, and therefore weak, way. They love him with the strength of the feeling and the weakness of the mind—that makes the emotionalist in religion; some love with the strength of the emotions and the weakness of the will—that makes the sentimentalist in religion; others love him with the strength of the mind and the weakness of the emotions—the mere intellectualist in religion; others love with the strength of the will and the weakness of the emotions—this produces the man of iron, very moral but unlovely and unlovable. The really strong Christian is one that loves with the strength of the mind, the strength of the emotions, the strength of the will—the strength of the whole personality—the entire being caught up in a passion of love and self-surrender to Christ."[2]

The divine ideal for man is that he attain the highest excellence. Just in proportion as God's will is done in the use of all his powers—physical, intellectual, emotional, and volitional—will this ideal be realized. "I plead with you therefore, brethren, by the compassions of God to present all your faculties to Him as a living and holy sacrifice acceptable to Him" (Rom. 12: 1, Weymouth's translation). The result of such consecra-

[2]From "The Christ of the Indian Road." Copyright, 1925. Used by permission of the Abingdon Press.

tion is personality at its maximum for service in extending the kingdom of God.

FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. What do you think is our most important stewardship? Why?
2. Show how the stewardship of the body is involved in living the most useful life. What if Moses had died forty years younger? or John Wesley? or Woodrow Wilson?
3. Give an example in modern life of some one who has done or is doing a worthy work despite physical handicaps.
4. What should be the attitude of the Church toward public health and health education?
5. Suggest some legitimate forms of recreation adapted to age groups.
6. Did the healing ministry of Jesus comprehend both mind and body?
7. Discuss the significance of the thinking of an individual to the whole of his life.
8. Discuss the influence of pictures, reading, and spoken language upon the mind.
9. What does it mean to apply the principle of stewardship to our talents?
10. What do you think will be the result in the change of view with reference to the learning ability of adults?

CHAPTER V

THE STEWARDSHIP OF PERSONALITY—MEANS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT

THE steward is under obligation to employ the means which make for the highest development of all his powers. Only by so doing can the duty of self-development be fulfilled. To use the means available for this purpose is a sacred debt to himself and others who may be helped by his improvement.

All social contacts, such as are had in the home, the school, and business environment, contribute to the well-being and completeness of personality; but these are beyond personal control. All do not enjoy the blessings of a Christian home. Good school advantages are not available for all, and satisfactory business surroundings are not shared by all. There are vital factors in character-building, however, which may be utilized by each individual and for the employment of which each individual is responsible, such as prayer, the Bible, the Church, and property.

PRAYER

The impulse to pray is a natural impulse of every normal Christian. This impulse is a gift from God. When followed it becomes a desire; and the desire when cultivated grows into a passion. Prayer is converse or personal communion with God. It is the means by which the human makes connection with superhuman power, a spiritual "wireless," "an open line of communication" with the skies.

We need the continual refreshing of God's Presence. How weak and empty, how barren and impotent are our lives unless daily replenished through prayer! The person who keeps up the habit of prayer on the dead level of life can rise in hours of crisis as no one else can. Prayer is the best arbitrator of all differences, the best cure and preservative against unkind tempers, angry and haughty passions. When we pray aright we do everything else that we should. We cannot pray for laborers as we ought unless we are willing to go ourselves, or for our children and loved ones to go. We cannot pray as we ought and withhold from God the money he needs that others may go.

We are accustomed to think of the command to "Go" as being the last command of our Lord; but his final, his very last command, was to "Tarry." With all their instructions and training the apostles were not yet prepared to go. They needed to be clothed with power from on high: in the upper room they were to be invested with this power. Tarrying was a condition of the divine enduement. So the disciples tarried until the enduement came, and went forth conquering and to conquer. Pentecost as a mighty fact in the inauguration of the dispensation of the Holy Spirit is past, but as an experience in the heart it is a perpetual possibility. Every Christian needs a personal Pentecost, and the way to obtain it is through prayer.

All great stewards have been men of prayer. David said: "I give myself unto prayer"—not simply his words and his thoughts, but himself. Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, Hezekiah, Elijah, Nehemiah, Paul, and the rest of the goodly company of the prophets and apostles grew mighty through prayer. Nothing is more

conspicuous in the life of Jesus than his habits of prayer. Luther, Wesley, Fletcher, Asbury, Finney, Moody, Carey, Hudson Taylor, Chinese Gordon, Wilberforce, and thousands of others like them have been mighty in prayer.

The story of how the most remarkable evangelist of the Orient, Rev. Ding Li Mei, who has been called the Apostle John of the Far East, came to be a man of prayer and power is a story of answered prayer. Though a Christian of the third generation and a graduate of Shantung University, when at twenty-eight years of age he took his first pastorate, he was a callow theological student unversed in the deeper things of Christ. A series of evangelistic meetings had been planned in his church, but at the last moment the expected evangelist did not appear. The lady missionary, a woman of much prayer, called the young pastor and told him there was no one left to take the meetings but himself. In anger Mr. Ding slammed the door and left the room. Broken-hearted, the missionary gave herself to prayer and almost in despair wrestled with God. That night the power of God seemed to fall upon speaker and audience alike. Conviction of sin was manifested. At the close of the service the young pastor went to the godly missionary and said with tears in his eyes: "Pray for me, that my sin may be forgiven and that God may use me in his service. From this day my life will be a life of prayer." He has held unswervingly through the years to this high purpose, and his wonderful ministry is the fruit of prayer.

The Bible

The Bible is the chief textbook of the Christian religion. It is, as its name signifies, the Book of books. It contains the Christian concept of God, man, and the world.

The Bible has been placed in our hands for our own enlightenment and improvement and for our use in making a better world. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Ps. 119: 105.) It not only furnishes light, it also supplies food for the soul. "Thy words were found," said Jeremiah, "and I did eat them." (Jer. 15: 16.) "Man shall not live by bread alone," said Jesus, "but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4: 4.) "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17, R. V.)

The Bible is the greatest creative spiritual force in all literature. It is even, according to Huxley, the most potent factor for moral culture which the human race possesses. While it is of Jewish origin, it was not intended for Jews only. It is a universal book. It embodies the fundamentals in morals and religion for all races and all ages. It contains the literature of the greatest movement of all time—the Christian movement to save the world. It is the Book of Redemption.

How may the Bible be used as a means of moral and spiritual development? It should be so read and studied, and its teachings so applied, as to get the largest results in Christian living. It will depend on the individual and

the situation as to how this may best be done. One or more of the following suggestions, however, will likely prove helpful in any case.

(a) Read the Bible. Read it for its history, its literature, its promises, its prayers, its stories, its hymns. Read it for comfort, for counsel, for information, and for inspiration. Read it by chapters, by books, and by periods. Read it from beginning to end. While there is no particular value in reading the Bible through just to be able to say we have read it through, nevertheless we cannot become familiar with its contents unless we do read it through. Read it in private, in the family circle, and in public, if opportunity affords. Join in the responsive reading at church.

(b) Study the Bible. Study its content—its history, its prophecy, its proverbs, its poetry. Study its authorship; seek to learn something about each writer, the circumstances under which he wrote, and the main purpose and burden of his message or messages. Study it by sequence, by its leading characters, and by themes. Study it alone and in groups. Secure the best helps you can afford to assist you. Talk with others and try to obtain from them light on the parts you do not understand. By all means avail yourself of the opportunities afforded for Bible study in the Church School.

(c) Familiarize yourself thoroughly with those passages which nourish and strengthen you most. It is well to memorize the twenty-third Psalm, the fourteenth chapter of John, the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and other great chapters or sections as well as many golden texts. Persons who cannot read the Bible for themselves can, by a little help from others, store their minds with some of its richest treasures. Ex-

perience has demonstrated over and over the value of being able to call to mind some appropriate passage of Scripture in time of special need.

(d) Select Bible teachings that relate to a definite, concrete life situation, and put these teachings into practice. Take, for instance, the teaching of Jesus, "Love your enemies." "I got even with my enemy to-day," said an old Indian; "I dined with him." That was his method of applying this teaching of Jesus. A farmer loaded down his wagon with good things and carried them as a present to a hostile neighbor. An immediate and complete reconciliation was effected. The best way to get rid of an enemy is to make him a friend.

The Church

The Church sprang up in the interest of the Christian life. The tender plant of new-born life which Jesus left young and weak in an unfriendly world needed the shelter of the organization which he called into being. He meant for his disciples to unite for self-defense and training, to organize for the common protection and development of their highest life in him. In the Acts of the Apostles we see the Church beginning its work of taking care of the spiritual life of its membership. What did it do? It provided the Christian life with a home, warmed it with fellowship, fed it with spiritual food, and kept it in health through activity. What it did in this first period is a fair picture of the permanent work it has to do. The Church is the institution which welcomes, nourishes, conserves, protects, and develops the life-power of the Christian religion. It calls the Christian life to acknowledge God's goodness, love, and

care in worship, prayer, and praise. It ministers the truth as it is in Jesus, the word of life, for its nourishment and edification. It furnishes congenial company for the Christian life to live and grow in. It sets before this life its normal work, encourages its proper habits of expression, and keeps the divine hopes and consolations alive and ready for use in time of need. It is the helper, sustainer, educator, and inspirer of the Christian life within itself. It keeps the windows of the soul open toward heaven, and the heart attuned to heavenly influence.

There is power in public worship. In the joining of hearts in public devotion, in common prayer and hymns of praise, there is a unifying and uplifting influence without a substitute or parallel in the spiritual realm. In public worship the lukewarm catch the spirit and enthusiasm of the more earnest Christians and are thereby encouraged and strengthened. Lukewarmness and indifference are curable. Some of the most faithful and outstanding disciples of the Christian faith are numbered among the reclaimed. Paul's expression, "Warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus," embodies the goal of the Church with regard to its members. The sick soul demands the attention of a spiritual physician just as truly as a sick body needs the services of a doctor. The Church supplies this spiritual physician in the person of its minister or one of its more spiritually-minded members. Thus shipwreck of faith may be averted, moral defeat turned into victory, and spiritual health and vitality restored.

A young man who had been a regular attendant at Church and Sunday school married, and established an

attractive little home. The first Sunday after the wedding, they both felt that they should attend the services of the Church as usual. But they might have callers; and as they were anxious to show their friends their new home, they decided not to go. The second Sunday it rained, and the young husband felt anxious about the bride's pretty hat; it might get wet, and so they concluded not to run the risk. The third Sunday the bride said she saw so little of her husband during the week that they had better give up Sunday school and Church for a time, and enjoy their new home. After some time had passed, the pastor met the young husband on the street and said to him: "We miss you very much from Sunday school and Church, and I shall expect to see you Sunday." He passed on without waiting for the young man to offer the excuse, "I have married a wife and cannot come," which he certainly would have done. On reaching home the young man told his wife what the pastor had said. They decided that they would not disappoint him, and the next Sunday found them at Sunday school and Church. In a few weeks both became intensely interested in the work and were given Sunday school classes.

The spiritual value of the Church to every disciple, whether weak or strong, is incalculably great. "All, of every age and station, stand in need of the means of grace which it alone supplies." The person who ignores, neglects, or despises the Church sins against himself and handicaps the development of his own personality. For man is a religious being; and if he holds aloof from the one organization whose specialty is religion, he starves and stunts the highest instincts of his nature. In the Church is the ministry of the Word. There is

nothing comparable to the preaching of the gospel. By it the hungry are fed, the bereaved comforted, the backslidden revived, the downcast uplifted, sinners converted, and believers built up in the most holy faith. In the Church there is Christian fellowship, the mingling together of the best people of the community in God's house, where rich and poor, old and young, learned and ignorant meet on a level. The Church is the only place on earth where all meet on the same plane. There is no other fellowship like the communion of saints. In the Church is observed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which Jesus instituted for his disciples. It testifies of his love for us, and his death for our sins. The observance of this ordinance calls his followers to repentance, and a renewal of devotion to him. The disciple who stays away from this feast displeases Christ and deprives himself of its gracious benefits.

"Religious worship is the most important single function of any people," declared Emerson. "I have no expectation that I will ever be able to destroy Christianity," said Voltaire, "as long as vast multitudes of people attend the churches one day in every week." "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand." "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

The Church is the supreme character-making institution in the world. It presents the highest ideals of life. It stands for the noblest thinking and the most sacrificial living. It is the advocate of every great reform. It is the world's mightiest agency for human progress. It makes crime difficult and virtue easy. It relates men to God savingly and satisfyingly. It relates men to one another in joyful fellowship. It furnishes

the greatest incentive and opportunity for the expression of sympathy, compassion, and love. It is the avenue through which men and women and little children walk up the heavenly heights.

Property

Aristotle was the first to make the appeal on behalf of private property that it is necessary for the free development of the higher life in the individual, and is the most effective stimulus to character and personal exertion. The average man wants a sphere which he can call "his own." The fulfillment of this desire stimulates initiative and self-realization. Property of his own is something man can rely upon as a means of subsistence and enjoyment, an essential element in a full, free life. Private property is an integral element in an ordered life of purposeful activity. For a man to have everything provided for him reduces him to the level of a child. Some liberty of action, some privilege of arranging one's own life in advance, some freedom of choice, and some certainty that a man will experience the results of his choice, are essential to the development of character. This cannot be unless there is some personal control over material things. Private property is not simply an arrangement for meeting successive momentary wants as they arise: it is rather the unity of life in its external or material form, the result of past dealing with the material world, and the possibility of future dealing with it; the general or universal means of possible action and expression corresponding to the moral self that looks before and after, as opposed to the momentary wants of a child or an animal. The moral advantage of private property over communism is that

it makes the man think of his life as a whole, and realize responsibility for his actions. Its ultimate justification is the worth of individuality, and the fact that individuality expresses itself in relation to external goods. Private property is the embodiment of one's own will in material fact. The institution of private property is recognized by society not as an inherent right in the individual, but because it is thought to be for the good of society as a whole. In the interest of society itself such virtues as industry, foresight, self-reliance, self-respect, and the like are quite as imperative as the more obviously and immediately others-regarding virtues. Private property is more conducive to the growth of character, for any other form of ownership destroys the possibility of exercising the important virtues of self-control and liberality.

While accepting the institution of private property as a condition of social life, Christianity changed the whole perspective and emphasis of men's thinking about it, and what is still more difficult, their feelings toward it, by teaching the incomparable value of manhood. Persons being God's one real concern, their welfare is the end for which everything that is or may become property exists and is held in trust from God. In the light of Christ's teaching concerning human value, viewed in and through the possibilities latent even in those of least account with their fellows, property has undergone a radical transvaluation. Moreover, like every other institution of society, it is subject to modification as in practice it fails to respect the sovereign rights of God in humanity, and to accomplish his purpose of bringing man into spiritual likeness to himself. Jesus recognized the character-making power of property,

and taught that one of the most potential ways by which personality can express itself and minister to life is through the use of material substance. In the heart of the Sermon on the Mount he laid down a guiding motive and principle for the acquisition and administration of property that remains valid, whatever else changes, as long as the world stands. Expressed in terse, positive terms it is: "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." This law of his kingdom admonishes us to win spiritual riches by the use of earthly goods. Acquiring and administering property with this end in view is Christian, and the effect on the administrator is marked and wholesome. In the processes of acquiring, saving, spending, and giving men develop qualities that cannot be developed in any other way. When the Christian motive is central in these processes, they become mighty factors in making character Christian.

Proportionate stewardship is the proportionate use or distribution of all one's property, and not simply the giving of a specified part of one's income. The giving of money, however, is a part of the Christian life just as truly as praying, reading the Bible, testifying, and attending upon the ordinances of the Church. It is both a Christian grace and a means of grace. It is absolutely essential to the development of a normal, well-rounded Christian life. It is not the gift but the welfare of the giver in which God is most interested. It is for the moral reaction on ourselves that he requires our sacrifices. The principles of Christian stewardship need to be wrought into the fiber of the Church to-day, not primarily that the Church may have a system of finance, but that its moral faculties may be developed. The

spirit of stewardship will redeem toil from its drudgery, dignify the struggle for existence, and lift coin out of the class of filthy lucre. This spirit carried into all material affairs will sanctify the methods of money-getting, investment, expenditure, and giving; it will humanize business and Christianize society.

(For an extended treatment of the acquisition, administration, and giving of money see Chapters VIII, IX, and X.)

Not for Self Alone

These personality-making forces are not given to us for self alone. They are not simply for the development and enrichment of our own lives, but that we may fit ourselves for larger service. We are not to use them selfishly, but for the blessing of others. The person who seeks to utilize them for himself will thereby defeat the very object of his endeavor. As character-building agencies, they are privileges and opportunities and consequently involve duties and responsibilities. We are stewards of these potential agencies, and should employ them not only for our own highest good, but likewise for the good of others. The most dynamic weapon of spiritual power we can wield is prayer, and the noblest form of prayer is vicarious intercession—unselfish pleading for others. The Saviour said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified." The psalmist prayed for himself and his nation, for the spiritual enrichment of the world. (Ps. 67: 1, 2.) "The Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends." (Job 42: 10.) The true steward of the Bible has a twofold object in striving to master its meaning and content—to incarnate its truths in his own life and to introduce others to its

messages of light, power, and inspiration. We are stewards of the Church, the greatest organization in the world; we have a duty to perform in extending its ministry and influence and the means of grace which it affords. Property is the greatest material force on earth; of it we are stewards and should use it to enrich life, the life of each individual steward and of society as a whole.

FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. What is meant by "a means of grace"?
2. Make a list of the great prayers of the Old Testament; of the New Testament.
3. Has prayer been a factor in your own personal development?
4. What is your method of using the Bible? Can you think of a better method?
5. What is the value and what is the purpose of the Scriptures as taught by Jesus? by Paul?
6. Does Christian testimony express character or develop character, or does it do both? What are its place and use in the New Testament?
7. How can you make better use of the Church than you have done?
8. What is your theory of property? Is it Christian?
9. What influences have contributed most toward making you what you are?
10. Which of the forces over which the individual has personal control is the most potential in building character? Which is the most neglected in your Church?

CHAPTER VI

THE STEWARDSHIP OF PERSONALITY—SELF-INVESTMENT

The development of personality should be followed by the right utilization of personality. The proper investment of life is a fundamental requirement of Christian stewardship. The purpose of the enrichment of personality is the enlargement of service.

God has made us coworkers with him in his program for the world. He is depending on us. Herein lies the most solemn significance of life and its highest glory.

The Greatest Investment

The greatest investment any man can make for the glory of God and the good of humanity is the investment of himself. Every man will be held accountable for what he does with himself even more than for what he does with his time, his talent, and his money; for what he does with these is determined and manifested by what he does with himself.

The biggest contribution a man can add to the general good is the contribution of a rich, genuine, Christian personality to whatever he touches—his home, his business, his community, and the world. "Your best gift to the world is the gift of yourself," said a man in a letter to a friend at Christmas time.

The strongest evidence and the most effective propaganda of Christianity is the Christlike character of its adherents. The most dynamic message is the life of

the one who bears it. An experienced missionary declared: "I have yet to meet a man or woman saved from the superstition of paganism, who had not been won by the example of the Christian living of another rather than by what he taught." What God and humanity need most are men and women who are living incarnations of the Spirit of Christ. "I am debtor," said Paul—that is, "I owe myself." This, then, is the attitude of the true steward: "I owe the world the best service I can render with the greatest gift that I have—my life, my personality, myself."

Democracy in the Christian Religion

God has no favorites—no favorite individuals, races, or nations. He desires the best for everybody. Whatever he purposes in Christ for any part of the world, he purposes for every part of the world. The aim of the Christian religion is to save all phases of the life of every individual. While in the thought of God there is a general purpose for all mankind, there is also a peculiar plan for each individual. "The glory and genius of Christianity is the recognition and development of individual worth."

Christ insists that the soul is of greater value than the whole world. This estimate is true of the man with one talent as well as the man with ten talents. Each person has a sphere of power, influence, and possibilities all his own. The bee sips sweet nectar from flowers and makes honey, a precious product not made by any other insect nor any machine that science has been able to invent. The value of the bee is due to the fact that it can contribute something useful to mankind that cannot be obtained anywhere else. So it is with man. Each

person has an individuality all his own, a service to perform not delegated to any one else.

Sir Michael Costa was conducting a great orchestral rehearsal in England. The man who played the piccolo stayed his fingers for a moment, thinking his trifling contribution would never be missed. Sir Michael at once raised his hand to the orchestra and said, "Stop, where is the piccolo?" Our Lord needs the note of every life to make the music of his kingdom. If one note is missing, the music is incomplete.

No man is nearer to God than any other man because of his profession, position, or station in life. Through the merit of Christ's death all the inalienable and exalted privileges of the gospel belong to all alike. Each disciple of the Master is definitely related to the great movement for the world's redemption.

How then can any one be content to remain a spiritual neutral in the affairs of the Church, having his name on the roll, but selfishly and sinfully withholding himself and his substance from the service of the kingdom? In a definite and deep realization of the stewardship of personality lies the cure for the common malady of non-participation which is paralyzing the spiritual life of so many Church members to-day.

The Motive for Investment

The obligation to live life at its best in order to make the kingdom of God a reality here and now is the law of Christian service. "It is not what we have in life," says William George Jordan, "but our attitude toward it—how we view it, how we live it, where we put the emphasis—that really counts." It is the service motive and not the profit motive that dominates the real

Christian steward. Why should not every Christian choose his life work in the spirit of the minister or the missionary, and embark on its accomplishment radiant with the thought of fulfilling God's will for his life?

It is not where we live and what we do, but how we live and for what purpose, that determines our destiny. Life prompted by wrong motives can neither be Christian nor truly successful according to the standards of Christ. The redemption of all human life in all its relations is the aim of the Almighty, and it should be the aim of all his children. The making of character or developing of personality cannot be achieved as an end in itself, but is a by-product of a life rightly lived in obedience to the laws of life and in relation to God's purpose for the world. "We are living in a world in the making. It is to be made from within by the indwelling of a right spirit, and persons are to be the chief instruments used in the remaking of persons." God desires the glad service of sons more than the obedience of servants.

Sonship and stewardship are related but not synonymous. Sonship is a form—the highest form—of stewardship. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." (1 John 3: 1.) When God has committed to us this highest trust—the stewardship of sonship—should not a stewardship glorified by a spontaneous and grateful love in service to him and our fellow men be our response?

The making of real stewards can only be accomplished by union with God through Jesus Christ. The first essential and commanding objective of stewardship is spiritual regeneration.

One New Year's eve a young man in New York, who was on his way to attend a meeting of young men that was being held to mark the closing of the old year and the beginning of the new, stopped and looked at the check that had been handed him that day as his share of the year's profits in the candy business with which he was connected. The amount was staggering and he began to feel such a tremendous sense of responsibility for its use that he changed his course and went to the midnight service his mother was attending, and there knelt at the altar with her in prayer. Later on in Paris, France, he reached a definite decision to devote his life and substance to the service of God and humanity, from which decision he never swerved. That young man was John S. Huyler, who became one of the princeliest of American stewards, giving first a tenth, then a fifth, then a third, then a half, and finally his all above a reasonable provision for himself and his family. The new birth is the beginning of the stewardship life, and the witness of the Spirit is its constant inspiration.

The Time Element

Value of Time.—"Life is but the individual trusteeship of time. Man does not truly own even his own life; he has merely a life interest in it." So says W. G. Jordan in his book on "The Trusteeship of Life." "Time," declared Mr. Edison, "is the most valuable thing in the world." Life (personality) plus time (which is impersonal) has made the world what it is to-day. Before there was money, or tools of labor, or architecture, or literature, or applied electricity, or locomotives, or ships, or airships, or statuary, or paintings, or music,

or radio, there was time. Personality, with the aid of time, brought all these things into being.

"Remember that time is money," said Benjamin Franklin. Diligence in business brings dividends in business. Time is also culture, for culture is the product of the persistent application of personal powers. Time is service, for work of any kind requires time, especially the epochal achievements of history. A moment, an hour, or a day saved is that much gained for service. Time is life, for character cannot be formed in a day or year, and character is essential to the highest realization of life.

All time is holy because of the high ends to which it may be consecrated. It is important to keep our week days holy as well as our Sundays. In the case of the Sabbath we find again that Jesus elevated personality to first rank and put law in a secondary place. He healed on the Sabbath. He made it plain that the design of the Creator in ordaining the Sabbath was the good of persons rather than the safeguarding of the day. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath," he declared. In this declaration Jesus set forth the guiding principle which is valid for all time in determining the right and the wrong use of time: it is to be used for the development and welfare of persons.

Life in accord with the principle of the stewardship of all time is the free, full Christian life rather than the routine life. Moreover, the proportion of time we should give to any one thing may change as we grow older. Nevertheless, the wise budgeting of our time produces a planned life, and a planned life is happier and more useful than a haphazard life. In making a budget of our time, any schedule to be complete must

include eating, drinking, sleeping, playing, studying, working, worshiping, and serving others. Jesus found time for all these things, and every person who wants to live the most useful life possible must find time for them.

Redeeming Time.—He makes most of his time who lives in accordance with his best knowledge and thought. Life is even more serious than death; for we are not responsible for dying (for the fact of death), but we are responsible for living (for the way we live). Time is not to be killed, or merely to be whiled away or employed to no purpose or advantage; it is to be *redeemed.* Time is redeemed when it is used for the good of persons.

Time is a bank deposit the size of which the depositor does not know. He draws upon it daily, but adds nothing to it. Neither does any one know just when his account will be closed. The solemn lesson the tolling bell of Time should teach us is not that of the sensualist—enjoy while you can; nor that of the sentimentalist—mourn, for nothing lasts; but that of the Christian—work cheerfully.

A nobleman is said to have spent fifteen years trying to learn how to balance a pole on his chin. He succeeded, but what of it? It is not only foolish but sinful to waste time in idleness or useless toil.

An English moralist had these words engraved on the dial of his watch: "For the night cometh." The last words of a soldier who had been converted shortly before his death were: "My message is that all who are wise should work in the great service while it is day, remembering the coming night."

"So teach us to number our days," said the Psalmist—our Christmas Days, our New Years, our Easters, our

Thanksgivings, our Sundays, and all our days—"that we may get us an heart of wisdom."

A due recognition and observance of the stewardship principle will solve the problem of securing a sufficient force of workers in each congregation who are willing to give of their time to the service of their Church and the kingdom of God.

The Method of Investment

All Legitimate Work Is Sacred.—What shall I do with my life? Where and in what way shall I invest it? "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" asked Paul when he had seen Christ and the center of his life had been changed. The question of one's life work is a question every person must face, and the answer to this question makes or mars one's happiness and success.

In the light of the principle of stewardship for all of life, it is apparent that there is no sharp dividing line between so-called secular and sacred callings. All legitimate work is sacred and has the divine approval. All occupations and professions are intended to be ministries. The farmer should raise crops, the teacher should teach school, and the doctor perform his duties with the same purpose and fidelity that is expected of a pastor at home or a missionary abroad. The true steward invests his energy for the upbuilding of the kingdom of God, even though his particular job may be delivering groceries or wrapping up dry goods. God is interested in every sort of activity which makes the world better, and no Christian should invest his life in any activity which does not minister to his fellow men.

"Since God is the Creator of all of man," says Albert

F. McGarrah, "business instinct and administrative ability are among his creations. Since God is the source of brains, and laws and forces which make inventions and management possible and give them their value, these talents are just as sacred as the talents of oratory or prayer."[1] He who serves well in his place, whatever it may be, serves the purpose for which Jesus came. Every honorable calling in which men are engaged is an opportunity for ministry to mankind.

Talents are given to us to help us serve others and make the world better. Every talent, whether musical voice, social grace, eloquent speech, business ability, gift of leadership, or any other gift, should be invested, not buried. God expects each one to be devoted to his high service.

How to Discover God's Will.—God has a plan for every man's life and his will is discoverable for every life. A means toward the discovery of his will is the practice of stewardship. "In all thy ways acknowledge him"—that is the practice of stewardship—"and he shall direct thy paths." We have a right to expect his guidance, and he is ready to give it to us in various ways. He gave it to Moses through the burning bush, to Jacob at the foot of the ladder, to Paul in the heavenly vision at noonday. To Abraham and Joseph and Joshua he gave it a step at a time. If we yield ourselves fully to him and wait daily for his direction as to our conduct and course in life, guidance is sure to come through the Scriptures, Divine Providence, conscience and better judgment, the counsels of others, and the leading of the Holy

[1] "Modern Church Management." Published by Fleming H. Revell Company.

Spirit. George Mueller stated that his way of finding guidance was as follows: (1) An obedient heart; (2) the will of God in his Word; (3) providence; (4) prayer; (5) judgment and a mind "at peace." Good suggestions to consider in arriving at a life decision are: (1) Get the best preparation for the best kind of life; (2) talk to God about your career as well as your character; (3) study yourself, your tastes and talents; (4) study the needs of the world; (5) give attention to the example and advice of trusted people; (6) make your decision in view of the best for your whole life.

Fields of Activity.—If you decide that full-time Church or religious organization work is not your calling, you will face the question of what other vocation you will follow. Other major fields of activity may be classified as follows: (1) The field of the artisan, one who works with his hands or brain in field or shop or factory; (2) the commercial field—business in one form or another; (3) the field of the professions—teaching, law, medicine, engineering, or any other occupations in this general group.

The prejudice against entering the ranks of the artisan because of a feeling that business or professional life is more desirable is rapidly passing away. The skilled worker is more and more coming into his own, and there is ample incentive for young people constantly to prepare themselves for the "job ahead." The commercial field, whether one enters as a clerk in a retail or wholesale establishment, as an office employee, or a stockholder, offers unlimited opportunities for service and personal advancement. A long period of training is required to become a professional worker, and because of the overcrowded conditions in the lower ranks the remuneration

is not so attractive except for the few who rise to prominence; yet the men and women in this field have many marvelous opportunities for influencing other lives for good and making the world better.

There should be no criticism of those who decide to live their lives as workmen in the shop, or as men or women in business or the professions, if they believe that this is their best way of serving the kingdom of God. They have opportunities that are closed to the minister and the whole-time Church or religious organization worker. It is theirs to represent Christ in the busy marts and markets, in the home and on the street, in office and shop, in factory and field. Their chosen occupation is not only their method of making a living for themselves and their loved ones but of adding their quota to the sum total of human wealth and happiness.

The Returns on Investment

It is said that not a sound has ever ceased to vibrate through space, that no ripple has ever been lost upon the ocean. Good thoughts, kind words, golden deeds, and a holy life are never lost. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

No toiler of earth can be more confident of results than the Christian worker. The farmer sows when his prospect of harvest is far from certain. A tempest, a hail-shower, a drought, or an insect may annihilate his hopes.

But the harvest of the laborer in the kingdom of God is absolutely guaranteed. His reward is not the result of chance or favor. It is the natural consequence of well-doing. We shall not gather thorns of grapes. The fruit of patience is not disappointment. The final issue

of endurance in doing good is not bitterness. The harvest of love is not pain.

We cannot calculate the hour of reaping, but the Word of God stands sure: "It shall not return unto me void," and "in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." How few converts Christ made in his earthly ministry! Carey labored seven years before the first Hindu was baptized; but to-day there are more than four million Christians in India. Judson toiled on until the churches supporting him grew discouraged and everything except his faith and God's promise seemed to fail; but by and by in a single year eighteen thousand converts were baptized in the field where he worked.

The story is told of a woman who had a rare rosebush. She tended it carefully for days and weeks without seeing the fruit of her toil. But one day she observed that a small shoot of the bush had extended through a crevice in the wall near by. She went to the other side of the wall and found her rose blooming in luxuriant fragrance and beauty. The lesson of this story to the Christian steward is: "Work on; the harvest is blooming on the other side of the wall."

FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Would you base your appeal for the stewardship life upon God's ownership of us by creation, preservation, and redemption, or upon our own deliberate dedication of ourselves to Him?

2. Write out with all sincerity and candor the motives which govern your life.

3. Do you think the making of money is a sufficient primary motive for taking up any position in life? Justify your answer.

4. What do you do with your leisure time? Why is the leisure time problem of unusual importance to-day?

5. How can we get more Church members to participate in the activities of the kingdom?

6. Discuss the unity of life with special reference to the phrase, "secular and sacred."

7. How did you find your life work? or have you found it?

8. How would you help a young person to find his place in life?

CHAPTER VII

THE STEWARD IN SOCIETY

MAN is a social being. It is contrary to his nature to live in isolation or seclusion. Even if it were possible for him to live entirely apart from his fellows, he could not thereby free himself from his social responsibilities. He may disclaim or seek to evade responsibility for the welfare of his brothers; nevertheless responsibility rests upon him. He cannot escape it.

Is our philosophy of personality true to the facts of life? Have we not sought to isolate individuality in thought, when, as a matter of fact, it cannot be isolated in actual life? Individuality cannot be individuality except as a part of some social body. It can only be understood as a unit of society. The root conception of personality, which finds expression in individuality, lies in the relation of person to person. Personality involves self-identity by and through identification with others. Personal worth cannot be discovered or estimated except in the society of which the individual is a unit. In personality itself, then, there is a collective element. It is representative of the body to which it belongs. The individual is inseparable from the fellowship which gives him individuality.

The kingdom of God is a social kingdom. Its field and opportunity are to be found in humanity. If only one person existed, we may imagine some virtues that he might possess, though we do not see how he could get them; but he could not devote himself to any service,

and there would be no such thing as the kingdom of God. Above all else the kingdom is a social spirit and a social force, manifest in the life of man with man. It is a matter of organized humanity and its distinctive work is helpful love.

The social ideal cannot be realized except as the ideal personal life is lived by many. Consciously or unconsciously we affect for good or ill the lives that we touch. It is the duty of the Christian steward to see that the influence he exerts in all his contacts is for good. For he is the representative of Jesus Christ in the world, and as such he should seek to find and fulfill his Lord's will in all of life's relationships.

Reduced to its simplest terms, civilization is built around five great social institutions—the home, the State, the Church, the school, and the shop. The social, political, religious, educational, and commercial life of the world should be shaped in harmony with the teachings of Jesus.

The Home

The family is ordained of God. The Hebrew nation originated with the family of Abraham. The whole human family grew out of smaller families. Everybody is in a family or has some family relation. The mating-instinct is a mighty spiritual force. It must be conserved and safeguarded for the preservation of the race and the good of society. Two of the strongest incentives for social purity and righteousness are the ties that pull us back to the old home and forward to the home of the future. The Christian standard of monogamy is at the very foundation of our civilization. This standard must be maintained. The final breakdown of the Roman

Empire came with the degeneration of family life. The straight path of the single standard of morals for both men and women is not only a divine requirement; it is the verdict of history. Herein lies the safety for the race. It is the duty of the steward to adhere unswervingly to the Christian ideal of purity in his inner thinking and his own manner of life, and to wield his influence in society for the maintenance of that ideal.

The family is a training school for righteousness. As is the home, so become the community and the state. The records of juvenile crime trace back mainly to broken homes. Unless the home life is healthy and sound, the life of the community cannot be. Moreover, all the immoralities permitted by the community and practiced by individuals react on the life of the family. If the community harbors conditions which undermine the family, the community will be destroyed at the source. The family must be protected against sex immorality, the fundamental sin which issues in the spread of sex disease, defective children, a multitude of crimes, sterility, and ultimately race suicide. Bad housing, filth and darkness, and overcrowding are the enemies of health and virtue, as well as low ideals. Christian ideals of family life demand good housing. One of the first evidences that the gospel had gripped the native mind and heart in Africa was the erection of two-room instead of one-room thatched huts.

The ideal connoted by the word "home" is peculiar to Christianity. In the old Roman world one of the distinguishing characteristics of Christians was their higher order of family life. The contact of Christianity with non-Christian social life results in a change in family

standards. In Uganda, where it was once a shame for a man not to have a large number of wives to cultivate his land, it is now a disgrace to have more than one wife. Jesus interpreted the world in personal terms and makes it one great family. How can we spread his conception of humanity unless we exhibit Christian ideals first in the family life? The ties of blood in the home—father and mother, son and daughter, brother and sister, grandfather and grandmother, uncle and aunt, cousin or other relation—entail an obligation and furnish an opportunity for social stewardship, as does also the presence of servants or others in the household.

The State

"As the State was formed to make life possible," said Aristotle, "so it exists to make life good." Government is of God, yet it was not given to man ready-made. "Deliberate choice," said Woodrow Wilson, "has always played an important part in its development." This is in harmony with God's will for man in creating him as a free and responsible being. It is people themselves who determine their type of government and have the inherent right to modify it as conditions demand. The justification and limitation of civil rights as well as all other principles of conduct depend upon their tendency to promote the well-being of human society. The success of a civilization must be measured not by the amount and character of its material products, nor by the special advantages it makes possible for a privileged class, but by the degree in which it enables all its members to have the chance of making the best of themselves. The tenure of property in any community must be judged by its tendency to promote what

alone is the real end of society—the best possible life for man in general and for all men in particular. Each individual citizen is responsible to the extent of his ability and influence for the laws of his community and state and for the enforcement of those laws. He is, therefore, under solemn obligation to do all in his power to make these laws what they ought to be and to see that they are respected and obeyed.

Christianity is the greatest asset any country can have. "Of all dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity," said George Washington in his Farewell Address, "religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness—these firmest props of the duties of men as citizens." Religion is needed for the safety of civil society. It is the foundation on which the whole structure rests. Laws will not have permanence or power without the sanction of religious sentiment. "There can be no substitute for Christianity. That, in its general principles, is the great conservative element on which we must rely for the purity and permanence of free institutions. That was the religion of the founders of this government and they expected it to remain the religion of their successors."[1]

The disciples of Christ represent the highest type of citizenship. A man cannot follow Christ and ignore or minify his duty to the State. Jesus enjoined allegiance to the State as a religious duty. "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." Our obligation to our government is a part of our obligation to our God.

[1]From a report of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Duties in the political sphere are religious duties just the same as are duties in the ecclesiastical sphere. We need religion in our legislative halls as well as in our Church tribunals. The hope of purifying our government lies in carrying our religion into the affairs of state. Whenever a moral issue is involved it is just as sacred to vote as it is to pray. There is a sense in which the ballot box is as holy as the Ark of the Covenant, and a commission to hold an office of public trust as responsible an obligation as is a license to preach. A Judas in politics is to be deplored, condemned, and deposed just the same as is a Judas in religion. The Christian religion makes men better citizens here on earth as well as prepares them for citizenship in heaven. Jesus was a true, loyal citizen of the State, as all his disciples—his stewards—should be.

The Church

The Church as a means of developing personality was considered in Chapter V. It is proposed in this connection to call attention to the steward's obligation to the Church as one of the great institutions of society. The Church helps the individual and the individual should help the Church.

The Church is the normal institution through which the individual can function in his efforts to help others and in organizing and directing his activities for kingdom advancement. Every member is an asset or a liability to his Church. He may influence others to greater consecration and fidelity in the service of Christ, or he may be a stumblingblock. Non-attendance, non-giving, and non-participation in the activities of one's Church is contrary to stewardship. The true steward expresses his stewardship in a sincere, Christlike life,

which manifests itself in worship, in contributing to the Church budget for both local expenses and connectional causes, and in participating in the program and work of his Church according to his time and talent.

Has a disciple of Christ a right to remain outside the pales of some Church? This question may be answered by asking two others. Can a Christian remain a Christian apart from others? Can a Christian do more apart from the Church than he can connected with it? In answer to the first question it may be said that the chief contact of the Church is social. Religion is not a thing between the individual and God alone. This leaves out our fellow men. The cultivation of the spiritual cannot bring forth fruit to perfection by private devotions alone. The touch of others who have similar struggles, doubts, fears, temptations, and aspirations is indispensable. This is provided in the fellowship of the Church. The livest coal in a furnace when separated from the rest of the embers will soon become a cold, dead ember, which cannot be made to glow again without contact with fire. In answer to the second question it is well to note that Christ established the Church for the good of his people and the fulfillment of his purpose for the world. If one man has a right to stay out, so has another, and then another, and all might claim the same right. The final outcome would be the extinction of the Church altogether. Even those who have broken with the corrupt ecclesiastical organizations of their day and age have been firm and ardent believers in the imperative necessity of a religious organization and have launched another on a higher and purer basis as a spiritual home for their converts and as a channel for effective service in helping to save

the world. Christ expects every steward of his to take his place in the ranks of the visible organization through which he is working to overcome the powers of evil and to usher in the rule of righteousness in the personal and social relationships of all mankind.

The School

The school is a selective and controlled environment in which education is going forward. Were it not for the school, experience would remain for the most part haphazard and aimless. The school makes it possible to select out of real life those situations that are educationally resourceful, to arrange them in proper sequence with reference to approved objectives, and to assist the student in learning how to respond to these situations in intelligent, purposeful, moral, and spiritual ways. The fundamental importance of the school in forming character and molding civilization is universally recognized. In the realm of religious education the potentialities of the school organized as a miniature society on the basis of the ideals, purposes, and motives of the kingdom of God, are paramount.

The relation of the steward to the school may be that of professor, pupil, or patron. In each of these capacities there are opportunities and responsibilities of vital import and significance.

The living voice of the teacher who can make clear great principles, who can answer questions out of his store of knowledge, who can warn against errors and fallacies, who can aid in forming the open and truth-loving mind, is of inestimable value. The professor with a religious spirit can create a religious atmosphere and accomplish untold good. An American teacher was

employed in Japan with the understanding that during school hours he would not utter a word on the subject of Christianity. The agreement was faithfully kept. Not a word was said to influence the young men committed to his care. But he lived the Christian life before them, and so beautiful was his character, so attractive his example, that forty of the students, unknown to him, met in a grove and signed a secret covenant to abandon idolatry. Twenty-five of them entered the Kioto Christian Training School, and some of them are now preaching the gospel which their teacher had commended to them by the contagion of a pure Christian influence.

The pupil has opportunity not only to learn but to influence others for good. When Arthur Cumnock entered Harvard the moral standards of the college were low. The students made light of virtue and many of them were living immoral lives. But for four years he remained steadfast to his lofty principles, and gradually won others to his side, and finally he was honored as the one who had done more than any other to tone up the life of the college until purity and goodness held highest place. In a testimony meeting during a revival conducted by George R. Stuart at Georgetown, Tex., one Southwestern University student after another arose and gave credit to the same person, Miss Alma Edwards, for leading them to Christ. Stirred by these testimonies, Dr. Stuart stepped forward on the platform of the tabernacle and said, "I had rather be Miss Alma Edwards than to own this world.'

All who are not professors or pupils should at least be patrons of the school. Recognizing the worth of the teacher to his community and state, and the worth of the institution which aids in laying the foundations of

a lasting civilization by helping the pupil to think, to love knowledge, to work happily with his fellows, and to fill his God-given place in life, they should encourage and help the school both morally and financially to the extent of their ability. They should favor proper legislation looking to the improvement of the school. They should aid in securing the best facilities for obtaining the highest education in health, morals, and religion for the largest number.

The Shop

The daily round of business with its social contacts is the best chance we have to present to the world a picture of religion in action. The farmer, the merchant, the lawyer, the physician, the banker, the clerk, the customer, the conductor, the passenger, the policeman, the employer, and the employee—all have their opportunities for real stewardship. Whatever his occupation, the steward's one business is to extend the kingdom of Christ.

How far do the ideals of Jesus prevail in modern business life? Is it organized on the basis of selfishness, profit, and pleasure, or on the basis of justice, love, and service?

The acid test of stewardship in the business world is, "What do you regard as the goal of our business?" Is it related definitely to the program of Christ? Does the kingdom have first place in your thinking, planning, and working? Do material things constitute your goal, or are they simply means consecrated to one great purpose—the bringing in of the kingdom of God? For those whose aim is spiritual, their business will be an opportunity for a spiritual ministry.

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There is perhaps no better example of a Christian steward in business, particularly in the realm of industrial relations in America, than the late John J. Eagan, of Atlanta, Ga. He was president of the American Cast Iron and Pipe Company of Birmingham, Ala. He made a study of his business in the light of the teachings of the New Testament, and resolved either to carry his religion into business or quit business. In one of the most remarkable documents ever written he turned over the plant at Birmingham to the employees, the common stock to be held in trust on certain conditions. His purpose in so doing, as indicated in the last lines of this document, was "to insure 'service' both to the purchasing public and to labor on the basis of the Golden Rule given by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

His policy in dealing with his employees was: (1) A living wage; (2) profit-sharing; (3) free medical aid for the sick and a fund for funeral expenses in case of death; (4) a pension fund for protection in old age; (5) employee representation.

The following quotations from his address on "The Golden Rule in Business" indicate his views and spirit:

"The true function of industry to-day is *making men*. . . .

"There are no soulless corporations. They are formed of human beings, stockholders, directors, officials, and all down to the smallest persons connected with them are human beings, and a human being has a soul, and so long as human beings can be converted, corporations can be converted. I don't want a new system, but I am interested in changing the hearts of men. . . .

"We have no right to rob the man who works honestly and faithfully of a good support for himself and his

family in order to enrich the stockholders or even to serve the public. Tell me that a corporation cannot afford to pay a living wage and I will tell you that corporation ought to go out of business. . . .

"Industry has no right to take a man, use the best years of his life, and as old age approaches throw him on the scrap-heap. . . .

"If we cannot put Jesus in business, we ought to get out of business, and get somewhere we can go with Jesus Christ."[2]

World Problems

There are two world problems which call for special consideration, the problem of the races and the problem of international relations. Jesus demands the conquest of every phase of life. The Christian should be concerned with humanity and especially where humanity is in distress, and humanity is in deep distress at these points, which affect the lives of multiplied millions.

The race problem is acute. Over two-thirds of the people in the world are yellow and dark, less than one-third white. There is a conflict among the races growing out of jealousies, rivalries, and superiority-complexes. How will this conflict be settled? What is the way out? It lies in a new sense of stewardship among the races east and west, dark and white. That sense of stewardship can come from only one source—religion. Christianity stands for the unity of mankind. Fellowship is a high, difficult, spiritual art which must be diligently cultivated in order to be established. The spirit and power of this art can only be found in the religion of Christ. How

[2]Taken from "Royal Partnership," by M. E. Melvin. Published by Fleming H. Revell Company.

shall this fellowship be achieved among the races? By a sense of stewardship that will lead them to share their best gifts with one another. Fellowship in science, in education, and in mutual service—this is the bond that will bind them together.

Since the World War the problem of international relations is giving the nations of the earth more concern than ever before. Heretofore war has been regarded as a nation's only defense against aggression, its most common method of punishing injustice, and its chief restraint on international wrongdoing. Shall this continue so to be? By every dictate of Christianity and humanity we must get rid of this relic of barbarism called war. We must find some other way of settling international disputes and enforcing international justice. What is the solution? It is to be found in the realization of national and international responsibility for preserving peace, and a definite, concerted, persistent effort to discharge that responsibility by waging war upon war, by substituting fair play for force, by insisting upon peace from ocean to ocean, and by settling international controversies by an appeal to the reason of mankind. It is incumbent upon every Christian steward to stand for those policies in his own country which seek to realize this ideal and apply the principles of Jesus Christ to all phases of international life.

FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Do you think the average Christian feels a deep sense of his obligations in his social relations? If not, why not?
2. Show how there is a collective element in personality.
3. What is the place of environment in the character-building process? Discuss the steward's responsibility for making environment Christian.

4. What are the reasons for the continuation of the family? What is the relation of the family to the community life? Illustrate the influence of the Christian religion on family life.

5. What is a Christian community? How far do the ideals of Jesus prevail in your community?

6. What is the relation of the Church to the social problems of the community?

7. In what realm is there the best chance to give an exhibition of religion in action?

8. What effect would the practice of stewardship principles have on conditions in modern industrial life?

9. Discuss the duty of the Christian steward as a citizen.

10. How can we help solve the problem of the races? of international relations?

CHAPTER VIII

THE STEWARDSHIP OF PROPERTY—THE STEWARD ACQUIRING

THE principles of stewardship that apply to the physical, mental, spiritual, and social nature of the person relate also to his material possessions. In fact, material wealth is stewardship's primary contact. It is stewardship in its simplest, most concrete, and tangible form.

What is property? It is value related to personality. Private property is value related to the individual and implies his right to use or refrain from using, and to allow or prevent others from using the things he possesses. Apart from personality there can be no such thing as property. There can be no possession unless there is a possessor. A dead man cannot own anything. Any estate left at death must be attached to lawfully qualified persons. Money is economic value expressed in coin or currency. It is value measured, described, and certified by government. It is our most adaptable possession, our most convenient medium of exchange, and is, therefore, wealth in its most usable form.

Acquisition is the first property problem. The stewardship of property begins with the acquisition of property. Is it right to acquire? What are the factors in the production of wealth? What methods of acquisition may a Christian employ? How much should a person acquire? What is the right motive for acquisition? These are living, vital, fundamental

questions the answers to which, in the light of the teachings of Jesus, will materially help the Christian steward in the solution of his first property problem.

Is Aquisition Legitimate?

The right of a person to own property has been recognized from the earliest times. Bargaining or trade had its origin in the recognition of this right. The first trade transactions were carried on by barter—the exchange of one commodity for another. As these transactions increased a need arose for a medium of exchange. One of the earliest mediums of exchange was cattle or sheep.[1] Abraham paid for a well with seven ewe lambs. (Gen. 21: 30.) The Zulus of South Africa pay their debts and reckon their wealth in cattle. Among savages some strange forms of money have been used, such as cowrie shells. The first American money was wampum. It consisted of small shells strung like beads. It was adopted and used to advantage not only in trading with the Indians, but also among the colonists. Three black beads and six white beads were equivalent to a penny. In the earlier days of Canada the Indians used beaver skins as money. As civilization advanced the necessity for a standard and a more convenient method of exchange became imperative. Now in the more civilized countries the precious metals, gold and silver, are used to make coins. and currency is created to represent these coins.

According to its political philosophy, as has been noted in a previous chapter, property is an integral

[1]The Latin word for *money* (pecunia) comes from *pecus*, a flock.

element in a free life, and is, therefore, as held by Aristotle, an instrument of the best and highest life. Some system of apportioning wealth is an indispensable condition of social well-being, and the maintenance of any such system is always better than anarchy and confusion. That arrangement of property is best which tends to secure such a life for the whole community. Individuality in the production of wealth is for the good of society as well as individuality in spending it, and should be made possible under any system. Perhaps the best that has been said in defense of the system of private property may be summarized as follows: (1) Material wealth is necessary as a condition of the higher life. (2) Some measure of private property is more conducive to the higher life than any form of common ownership, because (a) it tends more to real unity of sentiment than communism; (b) it is economically superior to communism, for people bestow more attention upon the management of private than of public property; (c) ownership is a source of pleasure; (d) it is more conducive to the growth of character, since communism makes impossible the exercise of the virtues of self-control and liberality. After all has been said in favor of private property that can be said, however, it must be remembered that the justification of private ownership must always be found in the welfare and will of the community. For private property is recognized by society not in virtue of any right or rights inherent in the individual, but because it is thought to be for the good of society as a whole. The ground of the recognition of private property in the past and present and the only justification of its continued recognition and protection by the established

laws of society, then, are its social effects, and above all else its effects on character. The ground of any and every proposed amendment to the system and laws of property as they now exist must rest on this same principle.

Looking at the question from the standpoint of Scriptural teaching, property rights seem to have been recognized and held sacred from the early history of the Hebrew people. The eighth commandment of the decalogue is "Thou shalt not steal." The Reformers and Puritans, in developing a doctrine of property, began with this commandment. "By this commandment, the proper owning of peculiar substance is lawfully ordained and firmly established. The Lord forbiddeth theft: therefore He ordaineth and confirmeth the proper owning of worldly riches. For what canst thou steal, if all things be common to all men? For thou hast stolen thine own and not another man's, if thou takest from another that which thou hath. But God forbiddeth theft: and therefore, by the making of this law, He confirmeth the proper possession of peculiar goods." (Bullinger.) St. Paul appears to sanction the principle of the inviolability of property laid down in the decalogue in his admonition, "Let him that stole steal no more." (Eph. 4: 28.) The apostle himself earned his own living at times even during his career as a missionary, working at his trade, which was that of tentmaker. Jesus was a carpenter. No doubt he was as skillful a carpenter as ever lived in Nazareth. His services as a popular young artisan would of course be in demand. He worked at the carpenter's trade until he was thirty years old. No doubt he was economical and during that time not only supported himself

but assisted in the support of the family. Moreover, after the death of Joseph, it fell to his lot as the eldest son, according to Jewish custom, to care for his widowed mother. It may be that his savings as a carpenter were sufficient to provide for her during the three and one-half years of his public ministry,[2] and at his death he committed her to the care of his beloved disciple, John. From the saying of Jesus concerning laying up treasures in heaven (Matt. 6: 19, 20), it seems to be the logical inference that he considered it not only legitimate to acquire property, but an obligation to do so both from the point of view of the Christian acquirer's own welfare and the opportunity acquisition affords for Christian beneficence. We must first possess earthly treasures before we can, by consecrated use, convert them into heavenly treasures. The acquisition of property is absolutely necessary if by means of property we are to store up a rich spiritual inheritance. The parables both of the pounds and of the talents clearly teach that intrusted capital should be increased by legitimate processes. By the righteous accumulation of earthly treasures we multiply our opportunities for laying up heavenly treasures. The steward is responsible for all the faculties with which he has been intrusted. It is God who gives the talent for making money. To neglect to use this talent is sin. The servant who hid the pound in a napkin and also the one who buried the talent committed to him were alike condemned because they did not make proper use of their master's money.

[2]This view is elaborated by P. W. Thompson in "Thine Increase." Marshall Brothers, publishers.

Factors in Wealth Production

Nothing which any one has is his own independent creation. Everything he possesses is either a bestowment, or an achievement with the help of forces which he did not originate. The production of wealth is a coöperative undertaking. In this undertaking there are three coöperating factors: God, the individual, and society. God supplies life and the raw materials: land, minerals, grain, and the chemical processes. The individual contributes his brain and brawn, his energy and talent, and his time. Even these, however, are gifts from God. Society furnishes the conditions of need which make trade possible. The law of supply and demand is social, not individual. The state, with its laws and its police, makes its contribution. The very tools of production are such that they cannot be operated by individuals working singly. All wealth is social. If there were only one person alive on earth and he had all the accumulated possessions of the ages in gold, silver, and currency, they would be absolutely valueless to him. Since society is so large a factor in amassing wealth, the right use of property on the part of the individual is a debt to society as well as to God.

Capital is a factor in wealth production—that is, it may be and is used to produce more wealth. However, capital is the fruit of labor and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. It represents stored-up labor and is the product of the three coöperating factors: the individual, society, and God.

Methods of Acquisition

The living of a stewardship life in the acquisition of wealth demands that we shall get our wealth righteous-

ly. If making money is essential, honorable methods in money-making are also essential. God wants to know how we make our money before he asks how we spend it. The barbarian acquired property by fighting or with the sword, and in the strength of his arm was the security of his title. The twentieth-century citizen secures his title to property with the consent of the community and that title is backed by the State. Right stewardship methods in business do not mean simply being honest or keeping within the law. Justice and love for men should prevail.

Property rights cannot alter the fact that God meant for the earth to furnish its fruits for the maintenance of all men. If men were true to God's purpose in giving the earth for the common use of all, none would lack. But such is not the case. Instead of sharing with others their superfluity, men seek to draw everything possible to their own private gain. Some prey upon the property of others and take unfair advantage in trade. Furthermore, the strong secure to themselves by unjust laws the property thus wrongfully obtained. Justice, with its offices of humaneness, equity, and pity, is displaced by proud and swelling inequality. This in substance was Lactantius's analysis of the state of things prevalent about him as it struck his Christian consciousness; and the moral roots of it he traced to "the desertion of Divine religion, which alone causes one man to hold another dear, and to know that he is bound to him by the bond of brotherhood, in that God is one and the same Father to all." In our economic system to-day the needs of millions of people are being supplied; but millions more are handicapped by poverty, bad sanitation, overwork, lack of education, or uncertainty of

employment. Moreover, vast differences in wealth lead to the lives of many being in bondage to the few, and often these few exploit their brothers—that is, use them without due regard to their welfare, or with only secondary attention to it; this results in great loss to society by breaking it up into antagonistic groups.

There are two axiomatic principles that should guide the Christian steward, or a group of stewards, in determining methods of acquisition: First, the incomparable value of persons as compared with property; and, second, the purely relative rights of any individual, not only as compared with God's absolute rights as Producer and Owner of all persons and things, but also as compared with the derived rights of society as representing the common weal, of which the individual weal is only secondary and should be limited by the rights of all others to the conditions of personal well-being. In the light of these principles capital will learn the supreme value of human life and recognize that it has value only as it serves human need, and captains of industry will see that business which does not serve some worth-while human need has no right to exist. In the light of these principles capital will realize that the question of wages for labor is not merely a matter of dollars, but that it is a question of sufficient food, comfortable clothes, respectable living conditions, medical attention, school and church advantages, good citizenship and upright character, and therefore that the first charge against any business or industry should be an adequate wage for its workers. In the light of these principles it is unqestionably evident that property should not be acquired at the expense of character, as is the case when the tools that people use are possessed

by selfish, grasping, and godless owners who have no sense of responsibility toward the uses, or when little children are placed under conditions that make impossible their normal development.

The two honorable and right ways of coming into the possession of property are by the favor of others and by the legitimate efforts of our own. The permanence of the family has a social value which the right of inheritance helps to maintain; nevertheless, that which comes by gift or inheritance is of far less value to us, for it supplies less of the character-value which comes as the result of honest effort in acquiring. What is inherited should be regarded as a responsibility to be administered, rather than as a relief from the necessity of labor. Legitimate efforts of our own in acquiring include labor, saving, and wise investment of capital. Labor is honorable. The Bible commends it. Moses wrote: "Six days shalt thou labor." Paul admonished the Thessalonians to work with their own hands that they might have need of nothing (1 Thess. 4: 11, 12), and he commanded that if any should not work, neither should he eat (2 Thess. 3: 10). In the teaching of Jesus we have no evidence of anything but approval of thrift and industry. The process of saving should start in childhood. As soon as the child begins to receive or earn, he should begin to save. In youth expenses are less and life insurance rates are lower, and there is more time for interest to accrue on savings invested early in life. Care should be taken to see that savings are invested wisely. The nature of the business, the character of those who are promoting it, and its effect on society—all these should be carefully considered. It is estimated that eighty-five per cent of all failures in

business are due to defects in the character of those who conduct the business. A Christian should not invest in any enterprise or business that is operating to the detriment of society.

How Much Should a Person Acquire?

The wise man prayed for the happy medium between poverty and riches as best for the welfare of the soul. (Prov. 30: 8, 9.) While social and economic conditions are vastly different to-day from what they were in Solomon's time, still this happy medium is the ideal lot for the masses to-day. The Church's ideal of property has usually been that of a modest sufficiency, gained by a man's own labor, to provide for his own needs and to enable him to do deeds of mercy to others. Christian teachers have been, for the most part, occupied mainly with questions of private ethics, not of community or state regulation, and, in so far as they have felt any scruples about the justification of large private wealth, the moral drawn has been simply an inculcation of almsgiving and beneficence. But the Church and Christian leaders to-day are directing their attention more and more to the immense problem of the economic reconstruction of the social order in harmony with the ideals and standards of Jesus.

Jesus did not idealize poverty, neither did he condemn wealth in itself. He associated with both the rich and the poor. He placed no limit upon the amount of property a person might acquire; to have done so would have transferred the center of power in the Christian religion from motive to externalism. He did, however, sound a solemn and emphatic warning against the danger of riches. The man of exceptional

privilege is more liable to lose the proper sense of values. The rich young ruler, who was outwardly a model young man, could not enter the kingdom because he idolized money. Paul also warned against the desire for riches: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition." (1 Tim. 6: 9.)

It is important to distinguish between wealth for use and wealth for power. The acquisition of property to meet legitimate needs creates no difficulty. It is the accumulation of wealth far beyond personal needs that leads to social unrest. The injustice of the ill distribution of wealth lies in the power that property gives some over the control of the lives of others. The desire for wealth to consume has its limits; the desire for wealth for power has not. For the steward whose supreme concern is to help others, the problem of too much wealth does not obtain, but only the means of its acquisition and use. The kind of stewardship needed in the modern business world is the stewardship of brains and managerial ability that concerns itself about providing opportunities for reasonable acquisition of wealth by others instead of the common practice of making profit for self the main motive. The spirit and attitude of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., is an index to the new order of things that should come to prevail. "Industrial relations," he says, "are essentially human relations. The day has passed when the conception of industry as chiefly a revenue-producing process can be maintained." This leads us to the next consideration, which is, What should be the main motive of acquisition?

The Aim of Acquisition

What is the right motive in acquiring? Is it ease, pleasure, greed, a place of power that comes with riches, or the highest realization of self for the largest service to the world? Should wealth be acquired merely for the sake of personal possession, or for self-improvement, protection against sickness or old age, to help the less fortunate, and to be able to wield the widest possible power for righteousness?

What is the goal for ourselves and for society? Can we find any end which we can seek together, and which, if all were to seek, there would be no danger of exploitation or conflicts? The answer is found in the statement of Jesus, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added." What a simple solution for all our ills! If all classes should come to a deep conviction that they should seek this one thing, and that this would meet all their needs, would not this common purpose bring them together into the closest bonds of brotherhood, thus removing the clashes and differences growing out of class distinctions? If the main purpose of business and industry was not profit, nor power, but the actual service of society, would not this unite all engaged in it? In such a society men would work in order to serve and help their fellows; when injured they would forgive again and again and never retaliate; they would care intensely to make life beautiful and happy for little children and for all people; they would not break or lose fellowship with their brother in a scramble for wealth; they would get rid of the barriers that divide men and engender strife, bitterness, and hatred; they would accept personal loss, if it meant gain for the world.

All the activities of life should be arranged around Christ and his kingdom as central. No person can have the mind of Christ if he is so busy making money that he is starving his soul. When we become so engrossed in acquiring that all other interests are crowded out, we are paying more for money than it is worth. We are putting profits above persons, which Jesus never did. Because material things are not of primary importance, a man should choose his occupation because of his fitness for it and the service he can render rather than for the financial consideration involved. Because material things are secondary, the Christian steward should not plan to acquire large wealth in order to leave funds for his children to make it unnecessary for them to work. Experience has proved that it is not best for the average person to be delivered from the necessity of earning a livelihood.

The end of all business should be the promotion of Christ's kingdom. The Christian should definitely recognize and regard the fact that he is God's steward in his business or whatever way he acquires wealth. Then his acquisition of money, whether by wages, salary, income from a profession, or business of any kind, will be a stewardship business. It is a good thing for a man to set himself to make money for God. But it is a higher thing for him to count his occupation as his method of serving God and man and to use his accumulations so that they express the righteousness of God and the brotherhood of man. It is not so much by his gifts as by his acts and purpose in accord with stewardship principles that a business man will do most for the kingdom of God. "Let each man, wherein he was called, therein abide with God." (1 Cor. 7: 24.) Every Chris-

tian should seek to turn the whole world of business in all of its phases into service for humanity.

FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Do you think it is right to acquire wealth? Why so?
2. What do you think was the attitude of Jesus toward the acquisition of wealth?
3. How is wealth produced?
4. Is God concerned about how me make money? How may we come into possession of property honorably? Is wealth being produced by wrong methods in your community? in your State?
5. When is a man an economic success? a social success? How much property should a person own? Is the possession of riches perilous?
6. Name some worthy motives for acquiring property. Some unworthy motives.
7. Is the motive of service placed above the profit motive in business to-day? If not, why not? What can you do to make it more so?
8. Do great fortunes help or hinder the social good?
9. How can a business man best serve God?
10. What is the secret of being able to meet our responsibilities as Christian stewards?

CHAPTER IX

THE STEWARDSHIP OF PROPERTY—THE STEWARD ADMINISTERING

CHRISTIAN stewardship is not the offering of the odds and ends of our time, talent, and material resources to God, as many have mistakenly supposed, but the whole-time administration of all our powers and possessions for God. Life in its entirety—brain and body, worship and work, inner spirit and outer activity—should be directed and administered in accord with his aim and desire. Everything should pass in review before him and be done with his approval. We should take him into account at all times, in all things, and in all places, and strive to make our thoughts, our words, our choices, and our deeds conform to his views, motives, and standards of life, as revealed in Jesus. The life of stewardship involves the practice of Christian principles in daily living and conduct of every kind, and consequently in administering as well as in acquiring property. The true steward concedes Christ the preëminence in all the affairs of life, including his earning, his spending, his saving, and his giving. The early disciples looked upon both their inner experience and their outer holdings as trusts from God to be used for the good of the whole human race. The fact that they had what others had not put them under obligation to serve, and the more they had the more they were under obligation to serve.

Next to the problem of acquisition, the problem of administration should engage the attention and thought

of the Christian steward of property. If these two problems are solved, the solution of the problem of giving will follow naturally and normally with the proper instruction concerning the causes worthy of support. *Possessions are vitally related to personality, not only in point of acquisition and title, but also in their control and use.* The right use of possessions means the mastery of self over substance, and therefore the victory over covetousness, growth in personal character, and a ministry of manifold blessings to others. We invest so much of ourselves in the making of money that it may be properly regarded as stored-up or coined personality. Money has potentialities more varied than power in any other form, except personality.

A practical proof of the acceptance of the Lordship of Jesus in all the relations of life is the recognition of his sovereignty in the realm of material possessions. Those who will not accept him as Lord in this realm, which is so intensely real, tangible, and obvious, certainly have not fully committed themselves to him in the intangible realm of the spirit. Failure to recognize God's ownership and their stewardship in the use of property is keeping thousands of people from enjoying a deep realization of the divine presence in their hearts and of the divine comradeship in their lives.

Major Importance of Administration

Unless property is properly administered after it has been acquired, our most essential needs will not be met. It seems much easier for many people to make money than it does for them to use it wisely. The people who earn money outnumber by far the people who administer money judiciously. The problem of administration

is bigger than the problem of giving or saving, for it includes both. With a multitude it is a bigger and more difficult problem even than acquisition. It is of primary importance, because administering is not only a manifestation of character but also a maker of character, and there is a greater opportunity for abusing our stewardship in the field of spending than in any other.

It is in the practical matters of expenditure that the most perplexing questions concerning the Christian use of money come home to us. It is here that the greatest wisdom of all is needed. The right use of money, according to Anthony W. Thorold, implies *foresight*, to be ready for losses; *self-control*, to be able to go without things that we should like, but cannot afford; *patience*, to know how to wait for what we wish; *discretion*, clearly to perceive what will suit us best; *self-denial*, that we may help others; *conscientiousness*, that in all we spend we may please God; *good sense*, to draw the right line between extremes on either side; *a joyous liberty of heart*, to trust the kindness of God, that he means us to be happy. "If not to offend in words is one sign of perfection, to make the right use of money is another."

The Christian Purpose in Administration

No person is qualified in a Christian sense to hold or administer property unless he does it as a trust from God. If we would use money aright, if we would "lay up treasures in heaven," we must first dedicate our lives and our all to Christ, else no amount of gifts or measure of personal sacrifices will avail us anything. An unbeliever may be generous, yet he is an unbeliever still, and as such he cannot share the inheritance of the saints of light. We are not saved by liberality; we are saved by

faith, one of the fruits of which is Christian liberality. When we have fully surrendered to Christ, then and not till then are we prepared to enter upon the administration of whatever he has placed in our hands as a trust. Stewardship puts no limit upon the authority of Christ: it is self that seeks to restrain his sway over the farms and factories, stocks and bonds, stores and banks, and the money and markets of the world. It is less difficult to give money, even to tithe one's income, than it is to handle all that we have as a trust from God. The rich young ruler was a tither; he kept the law from his youth up, but he declined to be a steward of the whole of his possessions. He would not deny himself by placing his all at the disposal of God.

The teachings of Jesus concerning the value of the individual make it plain that property should be held and administered for the good of persons, the person who holds and administers it and all other persons. This fundamental conception of the supreme worth of persons should be heeded by both rich and poor alike. The purpose of the Christian in administering his estate then should be the highest welfare of himself and those dependent upon him and the largest good of all mankind. Impelled by the love of Christ and the desire to advance his kingdom, he gives of his earnings or profits to worthy objects; he counts his occupation a divine calling and a method of making money for God; he conducts his business on the basis of love, justice, brotherhood, and service; he regards it as the major part of his stewardship to establish and express the Christian ideal in and through his business.

The informed disciple, therefore, is concerned with the ethics of the gospel regarding the whole of property and

recognizes that its prime purpose is to aid in working the will of God.

The Christian Program of Administration

What is the will of God touching the administration of property? Is it his plan that all earthly possessions should be put in a common fund and divided equally among all people? If wealth were leveled to-day, would it not be uneven to-morrow? Moreover, equality of possessions and income is not equitable; the needs of men differ, the size of one's family being an obvious illustration. Likewise the earning abilities of men vary, and hence the service they render humanity. Jesus taught the inequality of capacity and that faithfulness in the use of one's talents is rewarded by gain and unfaithfulness punished by loss. "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."

Is it his will that we should give away all that we have? There is only one instance on record where giving all was required, and that was the case of the rich young ruler whose salvation, Jesus saw, depended on just such a heroic piece of moral surgery. Zaccheus kept half his goods; nevertheless salvation came to his house. Usually a man can better serve God and his fellows by properly proportioning his income than by so dealing with it that he ceases to have an income. Our duty is not to give away all, but to employ all to meet personal and family needs and accomplish the greatest good for society as a whole.

The first essential in a satisfactory program of administration is to make a budget. A "budget" is what we say we are going to do with our income. Hence mak-

ing a budget is simply a matter of checking up and classifying our proposed expenditures. It is sitting down to count the cost before starting to build or begin a program. It is estimating in advance whether one's plans can be carried out. In the parable of the unfinished tower the Master Craftsman enjoins budget-making—a study of our resources to insure that we are able to complete the job. (Luke 14: 28-33.) By making a budget the Christian steward organizes his resources for their most effective and intelligent use.

An "accounting" is the record of what we actually do with our money. Both making a budget and keeping an account are of vital importance in the wisest administration of property. The government, great corporations, banks, successful business firms, well-regulated families, and individuals of prudence and foresight make "budgeting" and "accounting" a part of their annual program.

The principles of budgeting and accounting which have proved most successful in the development of persons are as follows:

I. Put God and his kingdom first. He is our Creator, our Keeper, our Father, and the Owner of all we possess. "Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth." (Deut. 8: 18.) "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase." (Prov. 3: 9.) Jesus taught the primacy of his kingdom as the goal of human quest. "Make his kingdom and his righteousness your chief aim." (Matt. 6: 33.)

"The first expenditure of all should be that which sanctifies the rest—that which is not for self or flesh or

earth or time, but for the Lord, for gratitude, for the training of the soul, for store in heaven."[1]

"It should be recognized by all good stewards that the first charge against their account is the Separated Portion—the share set aside in acknowledgment of God's ownership."[2]

II. Provide for the future. Economy is Christian. Thrift is wise. Saving is a Christian duty for those whose income is sufficient to permit it. It is a mark of sagacity, foresight, independence, and self-denial. The Bible nowhere encourages improvidence. Jesus opposed waste. "Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost," he said to his disciples following the miracle of the loaves and fishes.

The injunction, "Take no thought (be not anxious) for the morrow," does not forbid saving. It prohibits worry, anxiety, fretful care concerning the future. Not hoarding, but saving of the right sort—that is, from the right motive and method—tends to prevent or remove such anxiety and worry. As a matter of fact, many of the duties of to-day relate to the morrow. For to-morrow the sower sows, the plowman plows, the weaver weaves, the miller grinds; and if we should stop all labor which is for to-morrow, we should immediately reduce all the activity of the human race to a few of the most menial occupations.

The habit of saving with a worthy objective in view develops self-control and makes for real strength of character. "If you know how to spend less than you

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[1]From "Money the Acid Test," by David McConaughy. Copyright by Missionary Education Movement.

[2]From "Life as a Stewardship," by Guy L. Morrill.

get," said Benjamin Franklin, "you have the philosopher's stone." Ninety-five per cent of the employers, according to Mr. Babson, are employers because they systematically saved money, while ninety-five per cent of the wage earners are wage earners because they regularly spent their money as fast as they earned it.

Only about one-tenth of all Americans are self-supporting after sixty-five years of age. The saving of ten per cent of his income by the average young worker up to fifty years of age would from that time bring in more, in a savings bank, than the worker can then earn. "Despise not the day of small things." "Waste not, want not." To lay by something for a rainy day—for sickness or old age, or to care for one's loved ones in case of accident or death—and to save to promote the kingdom of God are a proper part of the Christian use of money.

III. Treat the whole income—what we give, what we save, and what we spend—as a sacred trust to be administered and accounted for as another's. By so doing the common round of human life is glorified with a sense of divine partnership.

In most cases the larger part of the income and the part most difficult to handle is that portion which is used for living expenses. If we set aside a tenth or more for giving and lay by a reasonable proportion for saving, may we not do as we please with the balance of our income? Not unless we please to do the will of God with it.

Usually this balance is four-fifths or more of the entire income. We are responsible also for the way we spend this larger amount, and should, therefore, give it the most careful and conscientious consideration.

For it, too, is God's, not ours, and we must answer for its use.

How are we to distribute this major portion of our income in order to best fulfill our obligations and privileges as Christian stewards?

1. *Fundamental and Legitimate Needs.*—The following primary needs require the expenditure of money:

(1) *Food.*—The body must have nourishment. A wholesome diet is essential to health and increases efficiency.

(2) *Clothing.*—Raiment is both a protection to the body and a mark of civilization. It is a necessity.

(3) *Shelter.*—Man needs refuge from the elements of nature—wind, rain, heat, and cold; from hurtful insects, beasts, and vermin; and from social dangers and exposure.

(4) *Operating Expenses.*—Water, fuel, light, heat, laundry, conveyance, furnishings, tools, the maintenance of business, profession, or other means of livelihood—all these are essential and necessary claims.

(5) *Education.*—The mind must be developed. To this end mental nourishment and exercise are imperative. Training in school, books and periodicals, travel, lectures, and any other means of gaining knowledge and culture—all these develop the person and increase his possibilities for usefulness in the world.

(6) *Government.*—The safeguarding of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness requires organized effort on the part of all good citizens, and so we have government. Taxation is the accepted method of its support. Every citizen enjoys the benefits of government—city, county, state, and national—and should pay his part of the cost of its maintenance.

(7) *Recreation.*—Expenditures for vacation, change of climate, rest, outdoor sports, amusement, diversion from the grind of business, medical attention—in fact, whatever tends to re-create the body and mind, to repair, rebuild, and renew the person for his task—all such expenditures are legitimate and worthy.

All institutions or utilities which minister to the welfare of the community, state, and nation, while not classified as primary needs, are nevertheless entitled to financial consideration because of their service to society.

2. *The Limitations of Love.*—In the application of stewardship principles to meet any one or more of these needs, is there a limit beyond which the Christian steward may not go? Christianity is a religion of liberty and not of legalism. In it motive is supreme. "Love the Lord Jesus Christ," said Augustine, "and do what you like." There are some admonitions and principles, however, which intelligent love may offer for our guidance in spending.

(1) *Some Stewardship Negatives.*—(*a*) Never buy what you do not need. (*b*) Never waste. (*c*) Do not borrow without the probability of paying, nor buy goods without the probability of paying for them. (*d*) Avoid "softness or needless self-indulgence." (*e*) Do not seek to get something for nothing or take unfair advantage in trade. (*f*) Do not live beyond your income.

(2) *Some Stewardship Positives.*—(*a*) All our spending should be on the basis of the kingdom of God first. (Matt. 6: 33.) (*b*) The test question for the Christian is not, "How much of my money *must* I give to God?" but "How little of the money God has intrusted to me do I need for my own expenses and how much can

I give or invest for others?" (*c*) It is legitimate to spend money for whatever we need in order to be at our best to render the best service for the kingdom. (*d*) The simple life is best—best for ourselves, best for others, best for the kingdom of God. (*e*) It is the purpose of a purchase rather than the price that determines whether it is a wise or foolish investment. (*f*) Money becomes a means of grace to him who uses it for God's glory.

(3) *Love's Standard of Living.*—The demand of Christian love in the expenditure of money is not simply the giving of a fixed proportion of income to distinctively religious ends, but the right and proportionate use of the ten-tenths for God. It calls for charity to meet present needs and mitigate the results of poverty, but also for such social adjustments as will remove the causes of destitution.

With reference to this expenditure or that, love applies this test: Will it make me a better servant of the kingdom? Love approves necessities—things indispensable to our well-being; *conveniences*—things which make life easier; and *comforts*—things which bring relief, cheer, and enjoyment without extraordinary expense; but in the light of so much tragic need in the human family love does not look with favor upon *luxuries*—things which gratify vanity, pride, or selfish ambition or desire without regard to cost.

Love utilizes wealth in creating remunerative work for those who need it. Love contributes the forces of organization and self-help to the new industrial order. Love employs laborers at a living wage, provides them a Christian environment in which to work, and gives them a voice in industry.

Love asks, "What is the ideal of property?" and

seeks to fulfill it. Love inquires, "How can the money-power of the world be so directed as most to benefit persons—all persons everywhere?" For the most gigantic unsolved problem of Christian civilization is how to do justice as between persons in the use of the wealth which is now so adequate in the gross for the needs of all the members of the social commonwealth. In the solution of this problem love, enlightened by the teachings of Jesus, will lead the way.

FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. What is your biggest property problem? Why?
2. What principle or principles of Christian stewardship were disregarded by the rich fool (Luke 12: 16–21)? By Dives (Luke 16: 19–31)?
3. What is budgeting accounting?
4. Discuss the principles of administering property which have proved most successful in developing persons.
5. Make out what you condsider a Christian budget on the basis of your income and needs.
6. If you had $10,000 and only one year to live, what would you do with it?
7. What are luxuries and what should be the attitude of the Christian steward toward them?
8. Do you keep an account of your income? of your expenditures?
9. How would you solve the problem of the ill-distribution of the world's wealth?

CHAPTER X

THE STEWARDSHIP OF PROPERTY—THE STEWARD GIVING

THE ultimate basis of Christian giving is the nature and character of God. He is a beneficent Being; the essence of his nature is love. He is the great Giver. He gives all things both material and spiritual.

Christianity is a giving religion. Other religions represent man seeking God through merit, gifts, or otherwise; Christianity represents God seeking man, and giving—giving himself—to find him. For God was "in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." (2 Cor. 5: 19.) Jesus gave—gave himself. The spirit of the Christian religion may be summed up in the words of Jesus preserved by Paul: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20: 35.)

God desires us to be like him. He longs to see his likeness reflected in our lives. Of all the Christian graces, that which is "likest God within the soul" is giving. The only way to make people like the giving God is to develop in them the spirit of unselfishness, which issues in godlike giving. For we cannot be truly godlike until we learn to give like God. Generous, godlike giving is an evidence and fruit of genuine Christlike living.

WHAT IS GIVING?

Much that is commonly called "giving" is not really giving at all. Exchanging presents—a custom that pre-

vails at Christmas time—is not giving. Parting with property for the sake of merit or favor, such as the purchase of indulgences, is not giving. Making a contribution for the purpose of self-advertisement or with the expectation of a full equivalent in return is not giving. It is true that a contribution may bring a return whether it is sought or not, but it is the motive of the contributor rather than the result that determines the moral quality of the act. "What, then, is true giving of money? It is the unselfish outpouring of oneself in substance. It is the voluntary bestowing of one's own possessions, expecting nothing in return. With the gift goes one's own good will, a part of one's very self."[1]

If all that we are and have belongs to God, how can we give him anything? If all is his, what we contribute is his already; how then can it be a gift? Can he be served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things? (Acts 17: 25.)

What we mean by giving to God is sharing our possessions, which come from God, with others for his sake. We are colaborers with him. He is doing something: "My Father worketh hitherto." Giving to God is entering into his labors. We cannot give to him except indirectly in ministering to the needs of his children. There are some expenditures which we are practically compelled to make by the circumstances of life in which we are placed. For instance, we must pay taxes; we must provide for the physical and temporal needs of ourselves and those dependent upon us. There

[1]From "Money the Acid Test," by David McConaughy. Copyright by the Missionary Education Movement.

are other expenditures which require a more positive exercise of the Christianized will, such as supplying the bodily needs of those who are not bound to us by the ties of blood or sending the gospel to the spiritually destitute whom we have never seen.

While money expended in paying taxes or in feeding and clothing one's own family is within the range of stewardship, and should be done to the glory of God; yet money spent to relieve the needs of some starving child or some family in distress, or to support a missionary—in fact, any offering devoted to the definite and direct effort to establish and advance God's kingdom on earth—is more completely voluntary and altruistic, and therefore more characteristically Christian.

Prerequisites of Acceptable Giving

Gifts have value and will benefit others according to their size and the cause to which they are directed, irrespective of the character of the giver. However, since salvation is by faith and not by works, the favor of God—the forgiveness of sins, acceptability before God—cannot be bought with money. A man may give any amount, large or small, and yet not please God with his gift. Society may be benefited, but the man himself will not be unless the prerequisites of acceptable giving have been met. These prerequisites are two:

(1) The giving of self is the first essential to right giving. It is impossible to discharge our stewardship obligations by the giving of money without life. "First they gave their own selves to the Lord," said Paul concerning the churches of Macedonia. (2 Cor. 8: 5.) The person is of more value than any gift he can bring.

It is the person that God wants, but he does not really get the person unless he gets his possessions, too. Personal surrender involves purse surrender; self-consecration includes wealth consecration.

The giving of self carries with it the dedication of all one's powers and possessions to God and his service. Money cannot be accepted as a substitute for self. Neither is the surrender of self complete unless one's property is included in that surrender. A man may prosper in business, amass a great fortune, and give away immense sums of money; but if he and his possessions are not consecrated to Christ, he is an unfaithful steward—a mere patronizer, seeking credit or advantage for himself, rather than a true philanthropist, giving himself with his gifts.

(2) The second essential to right giving is love. Without love any offering, or even self-immolation, is valueless in the sight of God. "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing." (1 Cor. 13: 3.) Giving may be systematic and proportionate; but if love is absent, it is not Christian giving. The Pharisees gave tithes, but they were devoid of love, and therefore were far from being Christian.

Love is the inner spring from which the stream of stewardship living and practice flows. "The love of Christ constraineth us" to give. With what gladness and liberality will men give when prompted by the love of Christ that fills their souls. Giving is a test of love. Paul exhorted the Christians at Corinth to abound in the grace of giving to prove the sincerity of their love. (2 Cor. 8: 7, 8.) The apostle John declared: "Whosoever possesses this world's goods, and notices his

brother in need, and shuts his heart against him, how can love to God remain in him?" (1 John 3: 17.)[2] The true steward administers his material goods as love directs.

Best Basis for Christian Liberality.—These two prerequisites, love and self-giving, constitute the solid foundation on which the right attitude toward material things—both their acquisition and their distribution—rests. The best possible basis on which to build the structure of Christian liberality is the Christian motive, spirit, and attitude in acquiring and administering property. For selfishness grips men before they come to the question of giving. True stewardship in getting and spending results in true stewardship in giving. It is also true that a careful, comprehensive, and conscientious study of the question of giving may lead to the Christian attitude toward property in all its relationships.

Guiding Principles in Giving

Christians should give according to principle and not according to caprice. The principles which should govern us in our giving are revealed in the Scriptures. The unmet needs of the kingdom, many failures in character, the inefficiency of many churches, and the bad effects of wrong methods are all due to the fact that professed Christians have not been diligent to find and follow the principles laid down in God's Word to guide them in their giving. These principles may be summarized as follows:

1. Giving should be worshipful. The first gifts of

[2] From "The New Testament: A New Translation," Moffatt. Published by Doubleday, Doran and Company, New York.

which any mention is made in Scripture—those of Cain and Abel—were offerings in worship. Abraham's offering to Melchizedek was an act of worship. The element of sacrifice in worship prevailed even among primitive pagan peoples. In the early days of Israel the bringing of an offering was required as an indispensable part of worship. "None of you must appear before me empty-handed." (Ex. 23: 15; 34: 20.)

Giving is spiritual and sacramental. It is as truly a part of the worship of God as prayer or praise. Temple offerings were a part of the regular program of religion in the economy of the Jews. The last public act of Jesus before the betrayal was to sit over against the treasury and watch the multitude cast in their offerings. Paul introduced giving in the Churches of Galatia and Corinth as a feature of their weekly program of worship. (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2.) The general practice in many modern churches and particularly in the elementary departments of the Sunday school of receiving the offering as a part of the worship service is to be commended.

Our worship habits are habits which hold and renew when interest flags. Worship that comes empty-handed soon ceases to come at all. The non-paying members in the churches to-day are usually the non-attending members. One of the chief reasons for the large list of inactive members on our Church rolls is their lack of training in regular, systematic, and proportionate giving as a part of worship. Giving not only blesses the giver and the receiver, but, as pointed out by Paul, it brings glory to God in worship. "For the service rendered in this sacred gift not only helps to relieve the wants of God's people, but it is also rich in its results

in awakening a chorus of thanksgiving to God." (2 Cor. 9: 12, Weymouth's translation.)

2. Giving should be on a stewardship basis. We are not owners, but stewards, of what we possess. We should, therefore, give as stewards and not as owners. The Israelites did not own Canaan; they occupied it as stewards. "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity; for the land is mine," said Jehovah. (Lev. 25: 23.)

The New Testament conception of man's relation to his material possessions is that of stewardship and not ownership. The change in attitude from owner to steward is a radical change: it involves a renunciation of all that one has. This is what Jesus meant when he said: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14: 33.)

The wealth of the world is God's. The power to get wealth is a gift from God. Man himself belongs to God. Giving should, therefore, be on a stewardship basis. What a revolution it would work in many of our churches if this principle were followed. Money-raising methods would be discarded for the stewardship method; the various projects for securing money indirectly would be no longer resorted to; the time, strength, and influence of many workers would be saved for vital and much-needed kingdom service because of the habit of direct giving. Moreover, by the adoption of the stewardship method on the part of its members, the Church would be saved from the appearance (and in some cases perhaps the actual plight) of manifesting more zeal for raising money than for winning people to Christ and helping them to find the abundant life which he came to bring.

3. God should be first in our giving. This is one of God's ancient lessons. The Hebrews were required to dedicate the first fruits of the harvest and the firstlings of the flock to God. The tithe of the land, of the fruit of the tree, and of the herd or flock was holy unto the Lord. (Lev. 27: 30, 32.) Under one form or another the idea of separating a part of one's property—the first and the best, not the leavings or the poorest—to God before the balance can be properly used has existed from the earliest times. This idea passed from the Jews to the early Christian Church and survives in the principle of the separated portion to-day.

The dedicated portion should be set aside in actual money in a separate bank account, or in cash apart from the rest of the income, or as a special account on the ledger. There is, then, a real, tangible fund for giving, and it is possible to determine accurately what has been given to know the amount available when any worthy call comes.

Not only should we put God first by setting apart the first portion of our increase, or income, but we should also put him first in administering the portion thus set apart. The interests of the kingdom should be supreme in our stewardship. We should give intelligently. "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase." How can we honor him with our gifts? We should study to know how we may honor him best. "Lift up your eyes, and look upon the fields," said Jesus. We should study the needs of the local church and community, the needs of the home field, and the needs of the world field, and the movements and methods best adapted to meet those needs.

Indiscriminate giving is unwise. "You can do more

damage to others through misguided charity," says Babson, "than through selfish extravagance."[3] We should seek to invest our gifts where they will do no harm, but real good, the most good possible. Some causes are popular and meet with a ready response. Others just as worthy, or it may be more so, have few supporters. It may be wise for some who know the needs of causes in the latter class to specialize in supporting them. Physical and spiritual needs—the necessities of the body and the hungers of the soul—both make their claims upon us. The world at large is more responsive as a rule to the appeals to relieve physical needs, while the hungers of the soul are fed almost altogether by Christians. The Christian Church ministers to the needs of the spirit—the deepest of all needs—and to the body with this end in view. It is doing a work that no other institution is doing or can do. It is the organization through which God has ordained to work more directly in spreading his kingdom. As a rule, it is the main channel through which Christians should direct their gifts. The first and chief claim upon the separated portion of the average member is to see that the Church is adequately financed. In addition to paying their part toward the local and benevolence budget of their Church, persons of large means should make large contributions to worthy objects and enterprises.

4. Giving should be systematic. Money represents life; it comes through the expenditure of time, talent, and vital energy; it is, therefore, a holy thing, and should

[3]From "Enduring Investments." Published by the Macmillan Company.

not be administered by a hit-or-miss method. Too often giving is spasmodic, dependent upon impulse, or governed by emotion, rather than the result of intelligent planning and a deep-fixed purpose.

Giving a bit of loose change now and then is not Christian giving. Neither is giving what we have left over after we have bought all we need, or think we need, Christian giving. We should know what we are giving and why we are giving it. When Jesus said that we should not let the left hand know what the right hand does, he did not mean that our giving was to be done altogether in secret or in a careless, irregular manner, but rather that it should be done without ostentation and self-advertisement.

To give when moved by a special appeal for a noble cause is praiseworthy. But we should not depend on stirring appeals to move us to give. Paul urged his converts at Corinth to give systematically from Sunday to Sunday in order that it might not be necessary to take a collection when he came. (1 Cor. 16: 2, 3.) The Christian should regularly set aside a definite proportion of his income for giving, and this should be regarded as much a part of his regular expenditures as what he spends for food, clothing, or rent.

5. Giving should be proportionate. Giving may be systematic and yet be meager, skimpy, stingy, niggardly, parsimonious, and, therefore, inadequate. Such giving cannot be Christian. "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing which the Lord thy God hath given thee." (Deut. 16: 17.) This was the law of Moses, and Paul's adaptation of it in the Christian dispensation was: "Upon the first day of the week

let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." (1 Cor. 16: 2.)

Giving should be in proportion to income and should increase as one's income increases. The person whose income has increased through the years, but who is giving the same amount to the work of the kingdom that he gave when he first started in business or when his income was much smaller, is violating this divinely revealed principle. The true steward finds genuine joy in the constant enlargement of his offerings to the cause of Christ. "He that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." Heroic giving is increased giving even when there is no increase in income, or maintaining a high standard of liberality even in the face of financial reverses.

What proportion of his income should a Christian give? A formal, ironclad, inflexible rule for all alike is contrary to the spirit of Christian liberty

"(1) Most of those who have adopted the principle of stewardship have found one-tenth a reasonable proportion with which to begin.

"(2) For many one-tenth is too small a proportion to express their interest and their ability to share in work for others. This is true of all those whose income exceeds by a considerable amount their necessary expenses.

"(3) For others in straightened circumstances and with definite responsibilities one-tenth may be too much to expect. These should not be deprived of the privilege and the benefits of the principle, but should

be encouraged to fix their own percentage according to their ability."[4]

The responsibility of deciding the proportion is left to the individual, and should be determined in the light of the requirements of simple, wholesome living, family responsibilities, the demands of efficiency in the performance of one's work, and reasonable saving to meet future obligations. As income rises the proportion required for the primary needs of life diminishes, and a larger proportion may be given.

The percentage of giving may grow from ten to twenty or thirty, or even fifty per cent or more, as is the case with some modern Christian stewards. There are a few royal souls who have made and invested enough for family support and are going on making money for the sole purpose of spending it all for the promotion of the kingdom.

6. Giving should be joyous. An unwilling act is never a completely Christian act. Under the Christian system there can be no legal exaction. It is not the thunderings of Sinai nor the demands of law, but the yearnings of Calvary, that motivate the Christian steward.

A miserly giver cannot be a joyous giver. Joy in giving is the outgrowth of the Christian spirit and a definite, fixed purpose to give. "Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for the Lord loveth the cheerful giver"—literally the hilarious or gleeful giver. (2 Cor. 9: 7.)

[4]Herbert Wright Gates, "Missionary Education in the Church," page 48. Copyright by the Pilgrim Press. Used by permission.

Love cannot be cabined and confined. It is far more powerful than law in controlling the actions of men when they actually and whole-heartedly come under its sway. As a lad Spurgeon adopted the plan of giving a tenth. When he won a prize for an essay on a religious subject, he felt that he should give a fifth of the amount. From that time on he was never able to deny himself the pleasure of giving one-fifth of his income.

"Freely ye have received, freely give," said Jesus. The Christian should give to others in gratitude for what he himself has received. The divine purpose in giving to us of his gracious bounty is that we may give to others. He blesses us that we may bless. The blessings that we *receive* gladden our hearts, but the blessings we *bestow* gladden them even more. It is what we pass on of our substance that brightens other lives and makes the world better.

FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Is the giving of the average Christian generous, joyous, and regular? If not, why not?

2. Name some advantages and disadvantages of emotional appeals for beneficence.

3. Should educational campaigns always be followed by a call for an offering? Which is more important: getting immediate funds, or the preparation of the people for intelligent and lasting giving? Is the giving of the average church according to true educational principles?

4. Should people be asked to give to a cause without first having definite information as to the need involved?

5. Make a list of causes and objects to which a Christian may give money

6. Has tithing been over-emphasized, under-emphasized, or wrongly emphasized?

7. Write out the advantages of giving a fixed portion of one's income. What are the advantages of giving it regularly?

8. Describe the financial system of your Church. How does it work? Is it educational?

9. Work out what you think is the best financial policy for the average local church.

10. Discuss how one is blessed more in giving than in receiving.

CHAPTER XI

PERSONS EXMEPLIFYING THE STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLE

THE emphasis to-day in the world of thought and action is on pragmatism in philosophy, experiment in science, utility in business, and experience in religion. Personal facts, attitudes, and habits are weightier in shaping character than abstract truths. "One sentence of experience is worth pages of philosophy" and a single "example" more than "a thousand arguments." "The greatest and most vital power in influencing life is personality." "It is better to have the story of one man who lived a partnership with Christ in business than a book of theory about it," says M. E. Melvin, in "Royal Partnership." "The best teachers of humanity," said Fowler, "are the lives of great men." "Biography," says Carlyle, "is the only true history.'

The pages of history glow with the record of great and noble lives sacrificially invested in the service of God and humanity. An incomplete roll of the most conspicuous of the faithful stewards of Old Testament times is contained in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. To this list the New Testament adds the eleven apostles, the evangelists Mark and Luke, Stephen the first martyr, Paul the steward of the gospel for the Gentiles, Zaccheus, Mary of Bethany, the poor widow, Joseph of Arimathæa, Barnabas, Apollos, Aquila and Priscilla, Lydia, James the brother of our Lord, Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Onesimus the slave, and

many more. Every century from the first to the twentieth has had its witnesses whose lives attest and exemplify the stewardship principle. Among them have been kings, soldiers, scholars, statesmen, orators, poets, philosophers, discoverers, scientists, reformers, musicians, artists, historians, financiers—a multitude of the most outstanding and influential personalities of the world, and many nameless saints—a vast majority who, though anonymous to us, have their names written on high. There are likewise thousands of men and women in the various walks of life to-day who are exemplifying this age-old principle.

Stewards of Means

When Mrs. Russell Sage was a country school-teacher on a salary of two hundred dollars a year, she tithed her income. As she increased in wealth, she enlarged her contributions to Christian causes. Her total gifts aggregate approximately $100,000,000.

Jay Cooke, who was for ten years, including the critical period of the Civil War, perhaps the clearest financial mind in America, was a firm believer in systematic and proportionate giving. His business houses tithed their profits for charitable and religious work, and he tithed his own income also.

This epitaph of Chinese Gordon appears in St. Paul's Cathedral, London: "Major General Charles George Gordon, C.B., who at all times and everywhere gave his strength to the weak, his substance to the poor, his sympathy to the suffering, and his heart to God."

To his genius for accumulation George Peabody added the genius for distribution. He is remembered by his large gifts to Harvard, Yale, Salem, and Peabody;

and his contribution of $3,500,000 for founding schools and colleges in the South. As a banker in London he studied the tenement house system and developed the Peabody Tenements, to which he gave $2,500,000 and helped 20,000 people to move out of dark and dingy dens into buildings that were light and sweet and wholesome.

John Ruskin was a rich but unselfish servant of humanity. He inherited many millions and earned a fortune in addition. He wrote a book at twenty-one that brought him fame. Every door was open to him, but he turned aside to become the defender and friend of the poor. He gave himself and his wealth to the service of humanity—first a tenth, then a third, then a half, and at length used up his fortune in noble service. He founded clubs for workingmen, and taught them industry, honor, and self-reliance. Carlyle called him "The seer that guides his generation." A modern philanthropist said: "All our social reform movements are largely the influence of John Ruskin."

Leland Stanford lost his only child. Though he was United States Senator from California, he said to himself, "I have nothing to live for. I have no children." He put a million dollars into a private home, but it was not a home to him. One night he had a dream. In this dream his son appeared to him and said: "Father, never say again that you have nothing to live for—live for humanity, live for other people's children." There soon arose at Palo Alto the Leland Stanford Junior University at a cost of $20,000,000. He and Mrs. Stanford became the devoted servants of the poor, the orphan, and the suffering, and left all their property to go on doing good to the rising generations.

A Farmer

About five miles from a little country town in South Dakota there lived a devout farmer. He operated a large farm, and acquired sufficient property to give his children, of whom he had five, a good education, and also to care for himself and his wife in their old age. With his entire family he attended Church twice on Sunday and the Wednesday evening prayer service, although their means of conveyance was often a lumber wagon. He had a family altar in his home. He was liberal with his means. He always planned his work so that he could devote a portion of his time to his Church. He held himself in readiness to do anything his Church called upon him to do, even to the extent of conducting public worship, if needed. With such a background of home life, his children grew up to be fine Christian men and women. The two girls married Christians, and the same Christian atmosphere surrounds their homes. Two of the sons are ministers of the gospel serving churches in the homeland, while the third is a missionary in a foreign field. This farmer passed to his reward a few years ago, having served well with his money, his time, his talent, and his influence. He did not acquire heaven at death: he lived it while on earth. His life's program was a success as a worker, a neighbor, a citizen, a father, and a Christian.

The Friend of a Needy Community

His given name is Robert. He lived in the suburbs of a city in a very small garage, meagerly furnished. He worked in a post office, led an exemplary life in his home, tithed his income, always attended all the church

services, and taught a class in Sunday school. He was the friend of the sick and the needy. He organized a Sunday school in a part of the town where the majority of the people were living in barns, paying for their lots on the installment plan, and feeling that they were unable to clothe themselves and their children in keeping with the fashion of the church some distance away. He organized the school under a tree on a Sunday afternoon. He invested his time, his money, his prayers, and his very lifeblood in behalf of this community. The Sunday school grew to have an attendance of nearly one hundred. In the meanwhile he became a credit man for a big department store, but he still labored in his chosen field. He erected a comfortable and commodious building for the school and the community. After working all day, he visited among the people at night, caring for the sick and holding prayer meetings. He found a talented and deeply religious girl of a poor family working in a laundry. He made it possible for her to go to public school and then to college, and to-day she is teaching the Bible in a college. He served one year as pastor of the Church in this community without salary, laboring six days in the week and tithing the income from his labor. He then joined the ranks of the itinerant ministry, and after serving two years in his home Conference he went to the mission field, where he is still living and toiling in the interest of a bigger community with a bigger need.

A Helper of Boys

In the capital city of the Lone Star State there lived a young man whose energies and gifts were all consecrated to religious work. He was teacher of a boys'

class in the Sunday school, a member of the Board of Stewards, and the Epworth League president. He was really the mainspring of his Church. He was always ready to do anything that his pastor or Church asked of him. He organized a boys' club for week-day activities. This club began with his Sunday school class and expanded to include all the boys in the Church around fifteen years of age, and many others. This was twenty-six years ago, before modern Sunday school ideas had been introduced into our Church life. He felt the need of a meeting place for his club; so he fitted up a big barn, on his own premises, for the club headquarters and as a gymnasium. He furnished the club room with tables, for reading and games, and put in some good gymnasium equipment. His work was almost entirely with poor boys. The development of those boys proved what a good steward he was of his influence and personality. Through the gift of a good woman the barn was replaced with a brick building for a Community Club House for boys. In addition to this program of service, he found an underprivileged boy who needed a home and took him into his own home for a few years. Then he found and helped another. These two boys are out in the world to-day occupying high places in their church and community. He was continually finding boys who were in trouble and spending hours with them in admonition and counsel. The ability and efficiency of this man were so recognized by his community that he was appointed Probation Officer for his city and for years he has been giving whole-time service to the kingdom in this way.

The Manager of a Department Store

The general manager of a large department store in a city of the Southwest is a member of the Lutheran Evangelical Church.

He is a man of large affairs and large influence. His influence reaches out into every phase of social life. It touches city administration, the public and private schools, and churches of every denomination. He moves in what is called the best society, and yet he is well known and loved in many homes of the poor.

His time, his money, his influence are used on the basis of stewardship principles. He is a large donor to all worthy enterprises. His name stands at the top in movements of reform and civic righteousness. His pocket Bible goes with him everywhere. On one occasion he said: "I have read this book on boats, on Pullman cars, in hotels, in railway stations, in schools, in churches, in the store, on street cars, and in many homes. I have read it to men of all ranks. I have read it to women, I have read it to children." He fills the pulpits of city and country churches of all denominations. He speaks to clubs, fraternal organizations, religious and political gatherings, and is often invited to make graduation addresses for the public schools and colleges. In all this he never fails to honor God.

He is liberal with his money. He uses it to help people find the right way in life, and to make them happy. One of the many unique things he has done was to advertise in the papers that if any poor boy or girl in the city had a dog in the pound and could not pay it out, he would pay the fee if they would come to him. Hundreds of boys and dogs have been made happy by

this humane deed. This is just one of many means he uses as a point of contact to lift people to God.

This man still lives and moves in his wholly unpretentious way as a mighty force for God.

One of God's Mothers

This is the story of Mrs. I. Z. T. Morris, of Fort Worth, Tex., a woman who gave the very best of her long life to the cause of the motherless child. This was a work her husband, a Methodist preacher, saw the need of and pioneered in Texas. But his vision and longing could never have been realized had it not been for his wife.

Mrs. Morris was the mother of ten children; yet she found time and strength to mother others. Often there would be at one time in her home that many children, other than her own, ranging in ages from one week to six or seven years. She cared for these until homes could be found for them. This meant that the material substance of this family many, many times had to be stretched to include the enlarged household. Such was the spirit of the mother and father that the Morris children caught it, and the sharing was not a sacrifice but a joy. At Christmas time each extra child in the home hung up his or her stocking and shared alike with the Morris children.

Caring for these children until suitable homes could be found for them meant extra hours of loving service, nursing back to health babies in all conditions and from all circumstances of life. It meant extra hours of household work, such as washing, cleaning, mending, sewing. Yet she did it all, and always there was room in her arms and heart for the new child her husband might find.

She learned everything she could about children, their nature and their needs, physical, mental, and spiritual, and came to be recognized as a good baby doctor. Thus she was using her mind for God.

As years went by this work grew into the Texas Children's Home and Aid Society, and a detention home was established separate from the Morris household.

After her husband's death, Mrs. Morris took his place in the work of finding homes for children. She was supposed to draw a nominal salary. But funds were often low and hard to get; so she never asked for salary, and many times it was never paid. But she did not falter. Up to the last she sought suitable homes and environment for the orphan, knowing each child by name, where its new home was, and whether or not it was happy.

Two days before she died a bitter cold spell came, and the ground was covered with snow. She looked at the many flowers in her room and expressed her appreciation of them and of those who sent them. But her great mother heart turned to the many little children so ill clothed in such weather, and she said, "I can't keep from thinking how many stockings the price of those flowers might have bought for all the little cold feet to-day."

Such a life can stand the acid test of stewardship in any and all of its many phases.

Diamonds in the Rough

A coal miner was asked, "Don't you find it pretty monotonous picking coal down here in the dark?" Picking up a piece of coal and looking at it thoughtfully, the miner answered in substance: "Yes, it is monoto-

nous. But you see this isn't just a piece of coal. What I am picking out of the ground is light and warmth and power. I sometimes think of all the streets I am lighting, all the homes I am warming, all the trains I am running. And then I am not a miner at all, but a minister to people who never heard of me."

Among the French Creoles, hundreds of miles from their own people, strangers in a strange land, there lived a family of five—the father and mother and three small children, the oldest not yet in her teens. The mother slipped away to her heavenly home, and the father was left with the sole responsibility of rearing the children. His voice was heard daily in prayer, for the family altar was a permanent fixture in the home. Though rich in things eternal, he was poor in this world's goods, but he found joy in tithing his income. He was frail and weak in body; yet he was faithful in attendance upon worship in the house of God, although it was with great difficulty that he went many and many a time. He never lost an opportunity to testify for Christ, nor to speak of him to others; and people came to him, during his last weeks on earth, to talk with him about their salvation. Above all he was faithful in the discharge of the stewardship of the little lives left in his keeping.

An Outstanding Steward

There is perhaps no more outstanding example of a person who exemplified the stewardship principle than William Ewart Gladstone (1809-98), of England. Probably no career in the sphere of politics contains so many inspiring and excellent lessons for the youth of the world. From early childhood and as a student

in school he was God-fearing, orderly, and conscientious. One of his schoolmates, Bishop Hamilton, of Salisbury, said: "I was a thoroughly idle boy, but I was saved from some worse things by getting to know Gladstone." In the daily routine of life he was scrupulously punctual and regular. Possessing a deep sense of the preciousness of time and his responsibility for its use, he sometimes awed his friends, his fellow workers, and even his wife by the way he filled up odd bits and scraps of time with correspondence, reading, or study. His remarkable strength of body and vigor of mind were due mainly to his exemplary habits and singularly upright life.

By proper use of his natural gifts and careful training he became an orator of unusual ability. He mastered many languages and cultivated the companionship of the best books. His library is a witness to his many-sided intellectual and spiritual life. His familiarity with history, literature, philosophy, science, government, business, finance, religion, national and international problems made him a charming conversationalist and a most interesting member of any social group. His home was a resort of poets, artists, theologians, and politicians from all parts of the world. Tennyson, Browning, Ruskin, Li Hung Chang, and Dean Stanley were among his guests.

His character was deeper than intellect, knowledge, oratory, or anything visible on the surface. He was truly, devoutly, consistently, and whole-heartedly religious. Religion was the source of his goodness and the mainspring of his greatness—the inspiration of his lofty ideals and masterful achievements. He attended church regularly, rain or shine. With an empire on his shoulders he found time for daily devotion. Sunday

was a great day with him and was spent in public worship, meditation, prayer, reading, singing hymns, good fellowship, and rest, so that Monday found him refreshed for the tasks of the week. The sweet cadence of his voice, the fascination of his personality, and the consecration of his rare gifts were wielded in the interest of the poor, the oppressed, the persecuted, and the well-being of all humanity.

He was economical in his expenditures on himself and family and generous in giving. His account books show in detail that he never at any time devoted less than a tenth of his annual income to charitable and religious objects. From 1831 to 1890 his gifts exceeded £70,000, and in the remaining years of his life the figure in his Benevolent Account stands at £13,500, besides £30,000 for a cherished object—the founding of a residence and library for students at Saint Deniol's. "I believe that the diffusion of the principles and practice of systematic beneficence," he declared, "will prove the moral specific of our age." In all the realm of literature it is doubtful if there can be found compassed in few words sounder advice for the guidance of the lives of young people than is contained in a letter which he wrote to one of his sons, then a student at Oxford. The letter is written from Strathconan, and is dated October 7, 1872. It recommends: (1) The wise and methodical use of time, and outlines a daily schedule of duties to aid in this; (2) keeping an accurate account of receipts and expenditures; (3) the proper use of Sundays; (4) the cultivation of self-help; (5) the dedication of a definite portion of income to purposes of charity and religion. In writing to the Secretary of the Systematic Beneficence Society he said; "I think the

object of the society (which I understand to be inducing men to give at least some fixed proportion of their incomes, such as their several cases may permit, to purposes of charity and religion) is one that may be legitimately adopted by all Christians, with the greatest and most beneficial consequences. And, although it is the religious character and effect of such a proceeding that has the first claim to attention, I for one believe its results would be no less advantageous from a social, and likewise economical, point of view."

He was statesman, orator, man of letters, theologian, connoisseur of art, critic of poets and philosophers, fast and genial friend, noble husband, wise and tender father, "the grand old man" of Anglo-Saxon civilization, the peer of the great masters of statecraft of all time. His life presented aspects of charm to all minds. His learning captivated the scholar, his eloquence and statesmanship the politician, his religion the preacher, his financial genius the business man, while his domestic relations, courtesy, humility, and simple human graciousness appealed to all hearts. Tennyson classed him as "the loftiest of English statesmen"; Lord Salisbury described him as "the incarnation of Christian statesmanship."

FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Which is more effective in influencing life, example or argument, theory or practice?

2. Name several Old Testament stewards and state what particular aspect of stewardship each best illustrates.

3. Mention several New Testament characters and indicate how each best exemplifies the stewardship principle.

4. Make a list of some prominent stewards in the period from

100–500 A.D.; from 600–1500; from 1600–1800; in the nineteenth century.

5. Who are some of the most prominent Christian stewards living to-day?

6. Give an illustration of the stewardship principle from your own observation.

7. What is your experience as a Christian steward?

CHAPTER XII

THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE GOSPEL

WHAT is the highest and ultimate end of Christian stewardship? It is to help bring in fully and realize completely the kingdom of God in the world. According to the standard of Jesus a steward's value to society must be estimated in terms of his worth to the kingdom.

The importance of the kingdom is manifest from what Jesus thought of it. His first sermon was about the kingdom: "The kingdom of God is at hand." His greatest sermon, that delivered on the mount, was an exposition of the constitution and laws of the kingdom. In the prayer that he taught his disciples the kingdom and its interests are placed first and humanity's needs second. All his parables are parables of the kingdom and set forth truth concerning its founding, its nature, its growth, the relation of its members to God, their fellow men, and worldly goods; and the consummation of the kingdom. His objective in performing miracles was to establish and promulgate the kingdom. His call and training of the twelve was to instill his principles into their minds and hearts in order that they might carry on the work of the kingdom after he was gone. His preaching after the resurrection, including his last sermon, was about "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

By the stewardship of the gospel—the good news of the kingdom—is meant the responsibility that rests upon those who have received the gospel to share its

blessings and benefits with those who have not received it. This stewardship is the one supreme, all-encompassing trust that has been committed to all the disciples of Christ, both individually and collectively—the stewardship that comprehends the use of all time, all personality, all powers, all truth, and all possessions to the end that all peoples may be all-evangelized and all-Christianized. The fulfillment of this stewardship constitutes the sole mission of his followers everywhere and throughout all ages. For this fulfillment ministers are licensed and ordained, churches are organized, buildings erected, schools established, Bibles printed and distributed, moneys collected, and all Christian activities conducted. All the programs of all the boards of all the Churches must be evaluated by the contribution they make toward the discharge of this all-embracing stewardship responsibility.

What Does It Mean to Be a Good Steward of the Gospel?

The missionary purpose encompasses all of life for every life. It has been inspiringly characterized as "the one purpose around which a man may build all the facts of his life and to which he may cling and let everything else go when he is hard pressed." Partial renunciation and half measures will not suffice for those who would be good stewards of the kingdom. Unreserved commitment of all of life to the program of the kingdom is required. This involves actually putting into practice the teachings of Jesus concerning man's relation to his fellow men, to money, and to the missionary enterprise. We can see what this means by looking at the life of one who really did it.

David Livingstone was a Christian in his attitude toward men because he was a brother. He pitched his live above the plane of jealousy. He manifested the generosity of his nature by leaving his first mission station entirely in the hands of a jealous colleague who assisted in rearing it. His management of the savages of Africa challenged the admiration and excited the wonder of the world. The secret of it was his brotherliness. He looked upon his attendants not as slaves, but as brother assistants. It was his custom when he received any presents from the chief of a tribe, as he often did, to distribute them among his men. He won his way by persistent kindness and forbearance. He was never harsh in dealing with a fault, for he said: "The consciousness of my own defects makes me lenient." He was the implacable foe of retaliation. He would suffer injury, but he would not fight. "I'll do anything for peace, except fight for it," he said. His brotherly soul was stirred to its depth by man's inhumanity to man as he saw it manifested in the incessant wars of the barbarous natives, in the heartless pillages of the Mohammedans, and especially in the horrors of the slave trade. He hated this abominable traffic and seized every opportunity to deal it a blow. How different his spirit and method from that of the ignorant barbarian, the cruel Mohammedan, and the self-seeking slave trader! He demonstrated that the best way to approach humanity even at its lowest is not like a heathen, a Pharisee, or a Mohammedan, but like a Christian.

In his attitude toward property Livingstone was a Christian. Indeed, his spirit and life were such as to make him one of the most remarkable examples of

Christian stewardship in the use of material possessions in the history of our holy religion. The first half crown he earned was laid in his mother's lap. After his conversion at twenty, feeling that the salvation of men ought to be the chief desire and aim of every Christian, he resolved to give to the cause of missions all that he might earn beyond what was required for his own subsistence. When he set out to establish his first mission he asked for two native assistants and offered to defray the cost of one out of his own meager salary. During the time of his first visit home he published "Missionary Travels" and realized a splendid profit from the sale of this book, which he used to aid him in opening up the continent of Africa and spreading the gospel among the natives. He fitted out his brother-in-law, Robert Moffat, sent him as a missionary to the Makololo tribe, and supported him three years, the total cost of which was fourteen hundred pounds. He declared that rather than sacrifice the good of Africa he would spend the last penny of his private means. To his daughter, Agnes, he wrote: "It is well to be able to take a comprehensive view of all benevolent enterprises, for we cannot live for ourselves alone. A life of selfishness is one of misery and is unlike that of our blessed Saviour, who pleased not himself." The statement of his life purpose became a watchword of the Layman's Missionary Movement and is destined to be a motto of Christian stewards for generations to come: "I will place no value on anything I have or may possess, except in its relation to the kingdom of Christ. If anything I have will advance the interests of that kingdom, it shall be given up or kept, as by keeping or giving it

I shall most promote the glory of him to whom I owe all my hopes, both of time and eternity."

In his attitude toward the gospel enterprise Livingstone was a Christian. From the time of his call to the Christian life he was a sender; from the time of his call to go he was a volunteer; from the time he heard Dr. Moffat tell of the vast plain north of his mission where he had sometimes seen in the morning sun the smoke of a thousand villages where no missionary had ever been, he turned his attention toward Africa. He was an explorer, "the greatest Puritan traveler"; he had the head of a scientist; he acquired fame as a geographer, botanist, astronomer, and geologist; but he had the heart of a missionary. When he determined to open up the interior of Africa or perish, he wrote to his friends: "Can the love of Christ not carry the missionary where the slave trade carries the trader?"

On the occasion of his second visit home he received a letter from Sir Roderick Murchison, of the London Geographical Society, offering to send him out and defray his expenses if he would go purely as a geographical explorer, but he replied: "I could only feel in the way of duty by working as a missionary." He was a missionary statesman. He saw that, before much could be accomplished in the way of evangelization, the land must be surveyed, healthy localities for mission stations found, better principles diffused, and the cursed traffic in human flesh, the greatest difficulty in the missionary's way, removed. He followed the guiding hand of Providence in seeking to do these things, and in answer to those who charged that he was lowering and secularizing his work as a missionary his great reply was: "The end of the geographical feat is only the beginning

of the missionary enterprise." God used him to interpret the many-sided task of Christian missions. By his life and labors he dignified this task and gave the missionary enterprise a prestige unparalleled in the history of modern Christianity.

How May We Become Good Stewards of the Gospel?

In view of the importance of the kingdom of God and our responsibility for its extension through the propagation of the gospel, how can we best discharge this responsibility and most successfully contribute to the consummation of the kingdom?

The Church with its many branches and agencies is the one organization whose direct and only object is the extension of the kingdom. We have noted in a previous chapter that the Church is organized to care for the Christian life; it remains to be emphasized that it is also organized to do the work of Christianity in the world. Its end is not self-training alone, but self-training for others. The Church preaches the gospel of the grace of God, not only to nourish itself, but to save the world. It is the central representative of Christianity in the world. It expounds to the world the truth as it is in Jesus. Both by persuasion and by godly example and influence, it endeavors to make converts to the Christian faith. It seeks to convey the gift of Christ to all mankind. So it organizes missions far and near and sends the message of life abroad to win its way. It is the living expression of the love of God in Christ toward men, loving the world as God loves it and seeking to save the world as God seeks to save it. It is the voice of Christianity, uttering its heart. It does good as it

has opportunity to all men in all ways. It stands for righteousness and brotherly love. It promotes good morals as a part of the true life of man. Its keynote is helpfulness. It is organized to help—to help one another, to help people near and far who need to know God, to help the world find its life in Christ.

The method of the Church in seeking to accomplish its task is the method of Jesus. He was a teacher, the Great Teacher. He used the highest art in teaching. He is both the despair and the inspiration of teachers to-day. The method of Jesus was not that of short-cut devices; rather it was that of expounding principles. So the search of the Church should be not primarily for devices, but for principles. This search it is carrying on through religious education, which is an attempt reverently to understand God's laws in the development of human life and intelligently to coöperate with him in carrying out his purposes, as Jesus did. Religious education seeks to enlist every one to help God make the world what he wants it to be. The laws of growth and development are impartial. The difference is in contacts. If these contacts make evil easier to learn than good, it is an indictment against the society in which we live. Character is an achievement, not a gift. What is made of latent powers is a result of the person's own reaction to his total environment. The educator's work, therefore, is to direct and stimulate; to provide situations that call for suitable responses. Religious education centers in and is built up out of the actual everyday experiences of the group. It brings religious teaching face to face with life, and leads to the construction or reconstruction of lessons and processes in the light of the pupil's nature and needs, and thereby

seeks to coöperate intelligently with God. It attempts to discover the best ways of promoting in little children, youth, and adults the full, rich life as Jesus revealed it.

The Church's progress, therefore, in all her fields and work, including that of Christian stewardship cultivation, depends directly upon her progress and success in religious education. Herein lies the surest road to a new civilization; and if the Church is to be filled with those who know world needs and practice Christian stewardship, obviously the training must begin with the child. God can accomplish through his Church what he intrusted his Church to do. He has intrusted his stewards not only with the gospel for every creature, but also with the means to send it to every creature. It is not because churches are unable that they are not doing greater things for the advancement of the kingdom; it is mainly because they have not been educated in Christian stewardship. People are not more faithful in their stewardship than they have been trained to be; they do no better than they know. Unless the Church promotes the knowledge and practice of Christian stewardship and informs its constituency concerning the needs and value of the kingdom, these vital things will not be done. For no other organization is sufficiently interested; no other is charged with this responsibility; and no other is adapted to the task. In view of the very large part that stewardship has in the molding of character and the bringing in of the kingdom, the Church should give a leading place in its educational program to instill stewardship principles in the lives of its members, young and old.

Jesus knew full well the program of the kingdom and

what was involved in carrying it out. In the light of this knowledge he laid down the major principles which will insure success. These principles may be summarized as follows: (1) We are stewards of all that we have and are. (2) We are a band of brothers with Christ as our Lord and Master and God as our Father. (3) Our task is world-wide, embracing all persons everywhere. (4) We are accountable to God for all, not just a fragment of our time, talent, possessions, and service. (5) It is the motive that determines the moral quality of our living and giving.

The serious application of these principles by the Church in its program of worship, work, and finance, and by its members in their personal attitudes, plans, and habits, will supply a sufficient number of trained ministers and missionaries to man adequately the whole field at home and abroad. It will furnish a full corps of equipped officers and workers in every local church. It will mean an interested, alert, zealous, devoted, consecrated Church membership. It will eliminate all non-stewarding methods and money-raising schemes for financing the Church, which advertise the lack of consecration of its members and bring dishonor to our Lord. It will inaugurate the method of direct, systematic, and worshipful giving on the basis of one's prosperity as the one means of support for the work of the kingdom. It will provide the buildings and material equipment needed in every locality of every country for the task in hand. It will meet the practical needs of our time for the spread of Christianity throughout the world and make possible the evangelization of every man, woman, and child in the world. It will lead ultimately to the

solution of all human problems and result in the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth.

Why Should We Become Good Stewards of the Gospel?

The program of the kingdom is not only intensive, including the whole man; it is also extensive, embracing all men. Desirable as it is to learn how to get out of life the most and best for one's self, it is a far greater thing to extend such benefit to the ever-enlarging circle of other lives. God desires the fullness of life for all his children.

1. *The Kingdom's Need.*—All men need the gospel, and God wants all men to have it. The every creature call is the call which Jesus heard and which he has summoned his disciples to hear. The transmission of the Christian message is the duty of every follower of Christ until the last man has heard the call.

(1) The kingdom needs aid from the point of view of its inadequate incarnation in its own adherents—the imperfections of its representatives in the world, its stewards, individually and collectively. When some Chinese converts were asked, "What is the greatest barrier to the spread of Christianity in China?" they frankly answered, "Ourselves." The chief obstacle in the way of Christian progress in China, in America, and throughout the world is ourselves, the evangels. Christianity has not failed; it is imperfect types of Christianity that have failed. The Christianity of Judaism failed. The Christianity of Romanism failed. The Christianity of Protestantism has not been sufficient. But true Christianity, which is the embodiment of the spirit and teachings of Jesus, has not yet been given a

full and complete trial. Semi-Christlike types of Christianity must pass away. The Old Testament type did not stand the test. Ceremonial, sentimental, and ecclesiolatrous types have been found wanting. We need not expect a hyphenated or paganized Christianity to succeed. At best it can only meet with partial success. "If Christianity centers in the Christian Church in the future," says Dr. E. Stanley Jones, "it will be because that Church is in the center of the Christ spirit." The only kind of Christianity that can stand every test and come out unscathed is the Christianity of Christ, which is applicable to all classes and all races, and to nations as well as individuals.

(2) The kingdom needs aid from the standpoint of its gigantic task of reaching those who have not yet become citizens. The great objective of its program is the transformation of the whole world—the world without as well as the world within—in harmony with the spirit and ideals of Christ. This program begins with the local community, extends to one's own nation, and widens to the uttermost parts of the earth. Few, if any, communities are yet wholly Christian; the vast majority of them are yet far from it. No single country or nation is yet entirely dominated by Christian principles.

The population of the world is estimated at 1,800,000,000. Only about one-third of this number are either actually or nominally Christian; another third have heard the gospel in a more or less adequate way; of the remaining third practically none know even so much as the name of Christ. Approximately half the people of the world are illiterate, have no knowledge of sanitation and hygiene, and do not have access to scientific medical aid. Half the homes of the world are without

the Bible. Two-thirds of the mothers of the world live in non-Christian lands under conditions which make the highest type of motherhood exceedingly difficult, if not altogether impossible. More than two-thirds of the children of the world are being nurtured by these mothers.

One-eighth of the people of the world are adherents of Islam, one-fourth are followers of Buddha or Confucius, about 400,000,000 are Catholics, either Greek or Roman, while only one person out of every ten is a Protestant Christian. There are probably 500,000,000 people now living in the world who will never have a chance to hear the story of the Cross unless Christendom does more than it is now doing to give them that chance. Truly to meet the present world situation the kingdom needs aid.

(3) The help which the kingdom needs is the very kind which the message of Christian stewardship is peculiarly adapted to supply. It is a message which in the providence of God has "come to the kingdom for such a time as this"—the most comprehensive conception now before the Christian world. The movement to evangelize and Christianize all peoples of all lands, which is the biggest, broadest, highest, and deepest movement of all time, in order to succeed, must have as its complement and counterpart the stewardship movement which encompasses all material and spiritual resources and their dedication and use on the part of all believers for kingdom ends. The conversion of the world waits on the conversion of professed Christians from passive to active members of the body of Christ. The kingdom waits on stewardship—the stewardship of personality, powers, and possessions of those who confess Christ as

Saviour and Lord. Neither we nor anything that we possess are exempt from the law of stewardship. Too long have professing Christians withheld from Christ whatever they have felt it was inconvenient to place at his disposal. Some have given money, but have withheld their time and talent; others have given service to ease their consciences from the guilt of withholding their money. The kingdom can only come when the stewardship ideal that all of life must be related to the divine program is accepted as the rule of faith and conduct.

2. *The Kingdom's Worth.*—The kingdom enterprise is worthy of our aid. Business men have a right to apply the same tests to this enterprise that they apply to any other business undertaking. "Is it honest? Is it safe? Will it pay? Is it big enough to be worth while? Will it succeed? Will it last?" Searching investigation in the light of these tests makes it increasingly evident that this enterprise offers the greatest opportunity for investment that has ever challenged the manhood of the world. Its ideals are the highest, its achievements the most inspiring, and its success beyond question.

(1) What are its *ideals?* They are: (a) The evangelization of the world—the giving of every person in the world an adequate opportunity to know and accept Jesus Christ; (b) the naturalization of Christianity—the permanent planting of the gospel and Christian institutions in every land; (c) the Christianization of the world—the application of the principles of the gospel to the total life of mankind. The fulfillment of this progression of ideals will mean the attainment of the final objective of the kingdom enterprise—a Christian world, which is a world in the hearts of whose

citizens Christ reigns supreme; a world of brothers, and therefore a warless world; in brief, a world fashioned after the mind and purposes of God as revealed in Jesus. For all to know God as Father, Christ as Lord and Master, and men as brothers—this is the great yearning of mankind, the meaning of the gospel, the supreme task of the men of good will of all lands, the goal of the ages, the pattern and substance of the world that is to be.

(2) The *achievements* of the kingdom enterprise, while yet far below its ideals, are nevertheless amply sufficient to justify previous expenditures, hold the confidence, and kindle the deepest enthusiasm of the investors. The adherents of the kingdom multiplied at the rate of one million a century the first two hundred years after Christ, six millions a century the next eight hundred years, ten millions a century the next five hundred years, thirty-three millions a century the next three hundred years, and three hundred millions in the last century. The geographical control of the world has gradually passed from the hands of non-Christian nations until now more than four-fifths of the planetary surface is under the governmental supervision of nations that are at least nominally Christian. Christian lands are increasing in population at a more rapid rate than non-Christian lands, notwithstanding the greater birth rate in the latter. Of the six hundred millions increase in the world's population in the nineteenth century, approximately four hundred millions were in the countries which know most of Christ and his gospel. The Bible has now been translated into more than six hundred languages and dialects. Political, scientific, and social progress must be attributed mainly to the paramount emphasis which Jesus placed on human

value and the consequent growing recognition of the preëminence of persons. The growth of democracy has followed in the wake of the Christocratic message of the missionaries, for all men are equal at the foot of the Cross. Science is the product of the emancipated intellect of the individual. The elevation of womanhood, the abolition of slavery, temperance reform, the protection of the rights of childhood, greater coöperation between capital and labor, philanthropic movements, humanitarian institutions, the profound, deep-seated, and increasing opposition to war; in fact, all those ideals, principles, and achievements which constitute the richest inheritance of the race—all these are traceable directly or indirectly to the gospel of Christ. Unquestionably the sovereignty of Christ is widening in an unmistakable way. "Christianity," says Robert E. Speer, "is moving out over the earth with ever-enlarging agencies, with ever-increasing success, and with open and undiscouraged purpose to win the world."

(3) The gathering *momentum* of the kingdom makes, or should make, an irresistible appeal. The Christian can be confident of victory. He is not investing in a failing enterprise. Although there are still great spiritual battles to be fought and colossal problems to be solved—probably greater than any men have ever yet faced—nevertheless the final issue cannot be in doubt. For God has pledged universal dominion to his Son. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end" (Isa. 9: 7); "I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Ps. 2: 8); "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11: 9); "He shall have dominion

from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Ps. 72: 8).

"Thy kingdom come . . . on earth, as it is in heaven." This prayer is prophetic. Jesus would not have taught us to pray constantly for something that is impossible of accomplishment. The method by which the kingdom seeks to prevail is prophetic. It is not external, it is internal; it is not material force, it is love and truth. Love is stronger than violence, and truth is mightier than the sword. "The Lion of the tribe of Judah" shall conquer because he is a "Lamb." The kingdom is worthy, for the Lamb is worthy, and the Lamb is King forevermore. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. 5: 12). "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11: 15).

FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

1. Discuss some of the reasons why a majority of Church members are not wholly committed to the principles of Christian stewardship.
2. Discuss the Church's responsibility for the spread of the gospel; for stewardship teaching.
3. Work out a stewardship cultivation program for your own Church.
4. How would the serious practice of the major principles taught by Jesus help the program of the kingdom?
5. Discuss the present world situation and show wherein the kingdom needs help.
6. What is the kind of help most needed to carry out the present program of the Church?
7. Why is the kingdom worthy of help? Give three reasons and discuss each.

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